



LEGION OF
SUPER-HEROES

4
FEB 90

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES

KEITH GIFFEN
TOM & MARY
BIERBAUM
AL GORDON

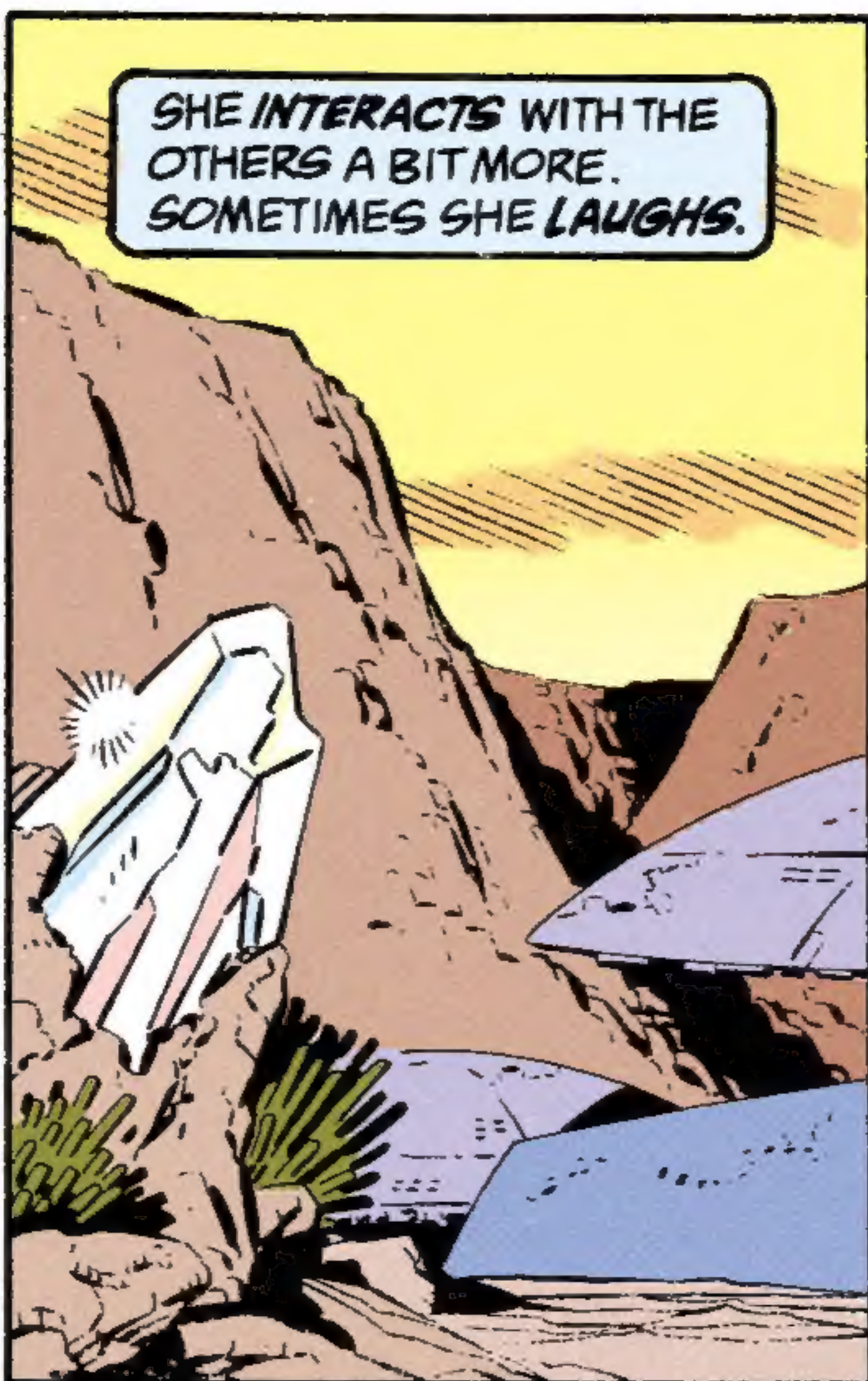




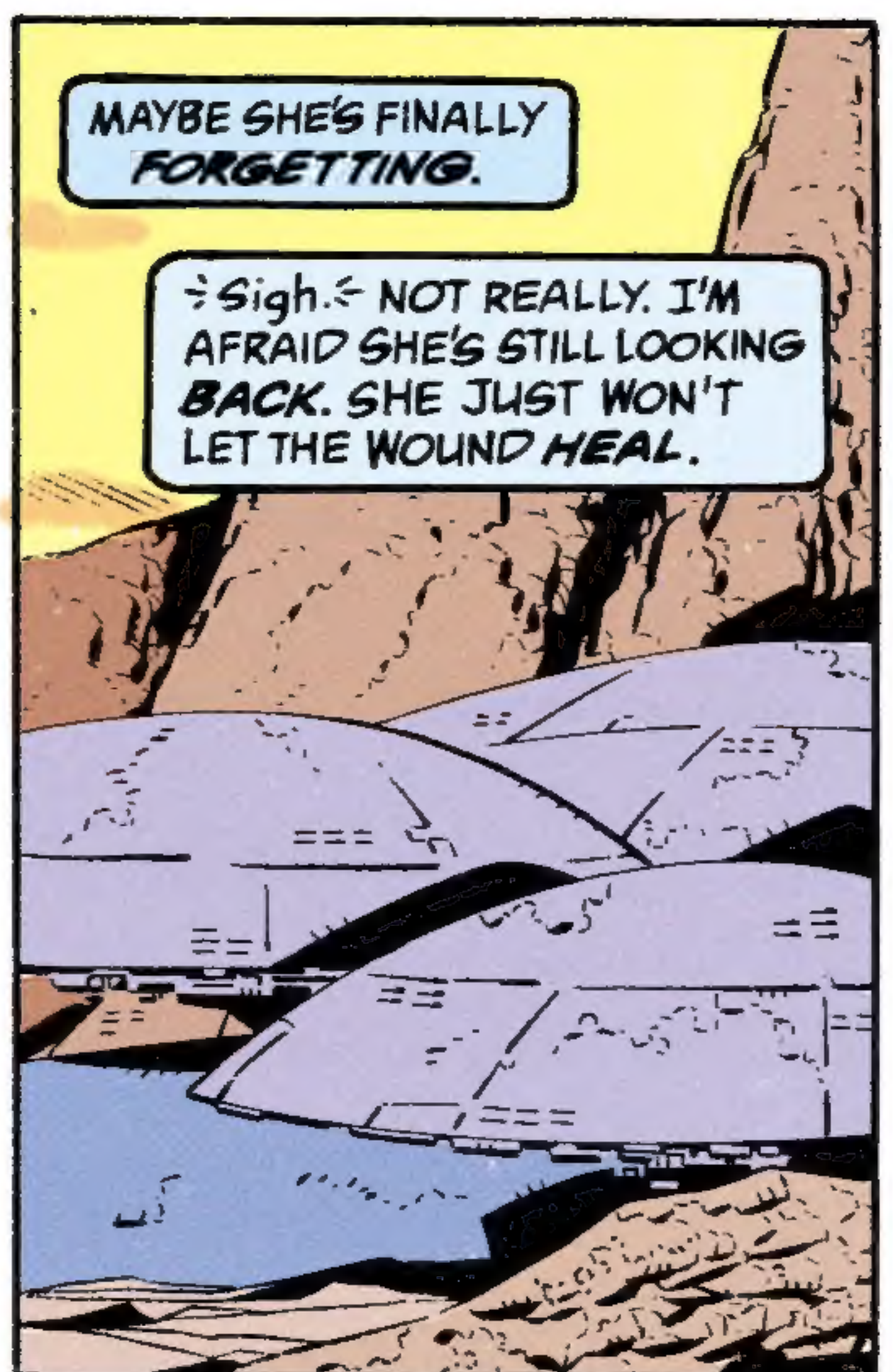
TALOK VIII...

HOW HAS SHE BEEN DOING, MATRE?

A LITTLE BETTER, I BELIEVE.



SHE INTERACTS WITH THE OTHERS A BIT MORE. SOMETIMES SHE LAUGHS.



MAYBE SHE'S FINALLY FORGETTING.

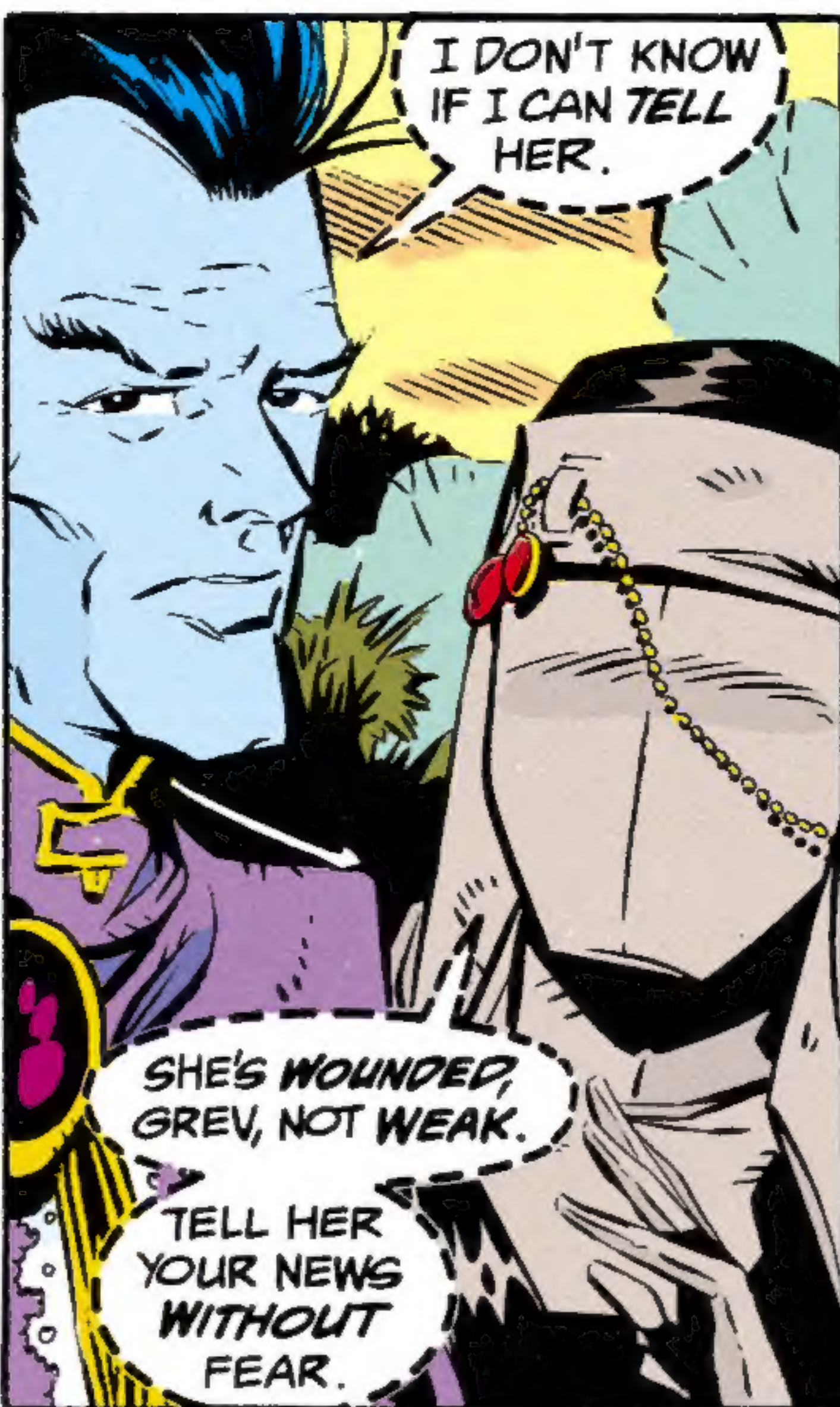
÷ Sigh. ÷ NOT REALLY. I'M AFRAID SHE'S STILL LOOKING BACK. SHE JUST WON'T LET THE WOUND HEAL.



YOUR COUSIN STILL SEARCHES, GREV. AND I'M AFRAID WHAT SHE'S LOOKING FOR IS GONE FOREVER.

GODS AND DEMONS! HOW SHE LOVED THAT MAN.

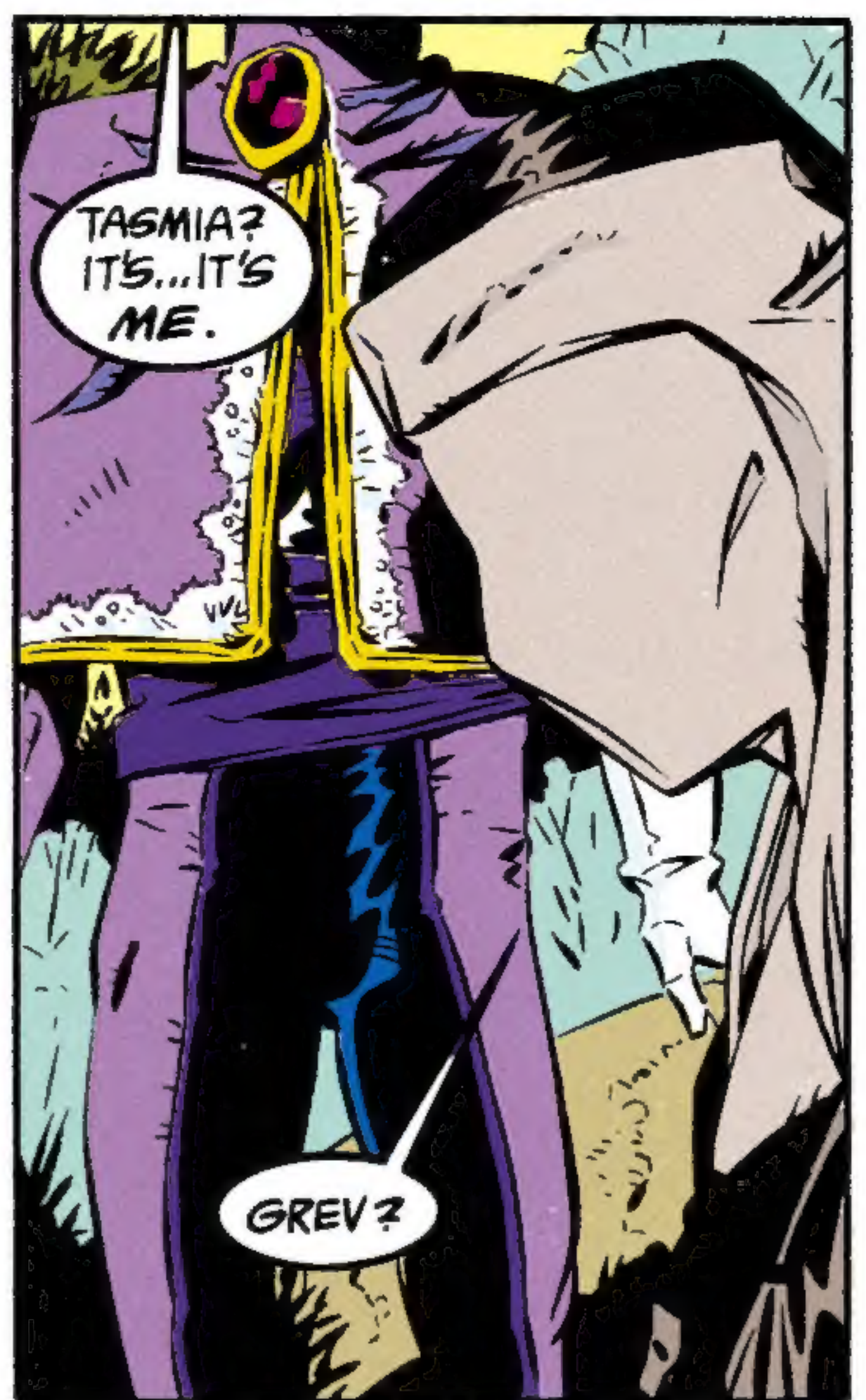
AND NOW THE COUNCIL DOES THIS TO HER...



I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN TELL HER.

SHE'S WOUNDED, GREV, NOT WEAK.

TELL HER YOUR NEWS WITHOUT FEAR.



TASMIA? IT'S...IT'S ME.

GREV?



TASMIA, I, AH...I CAME TO TELL YOU...

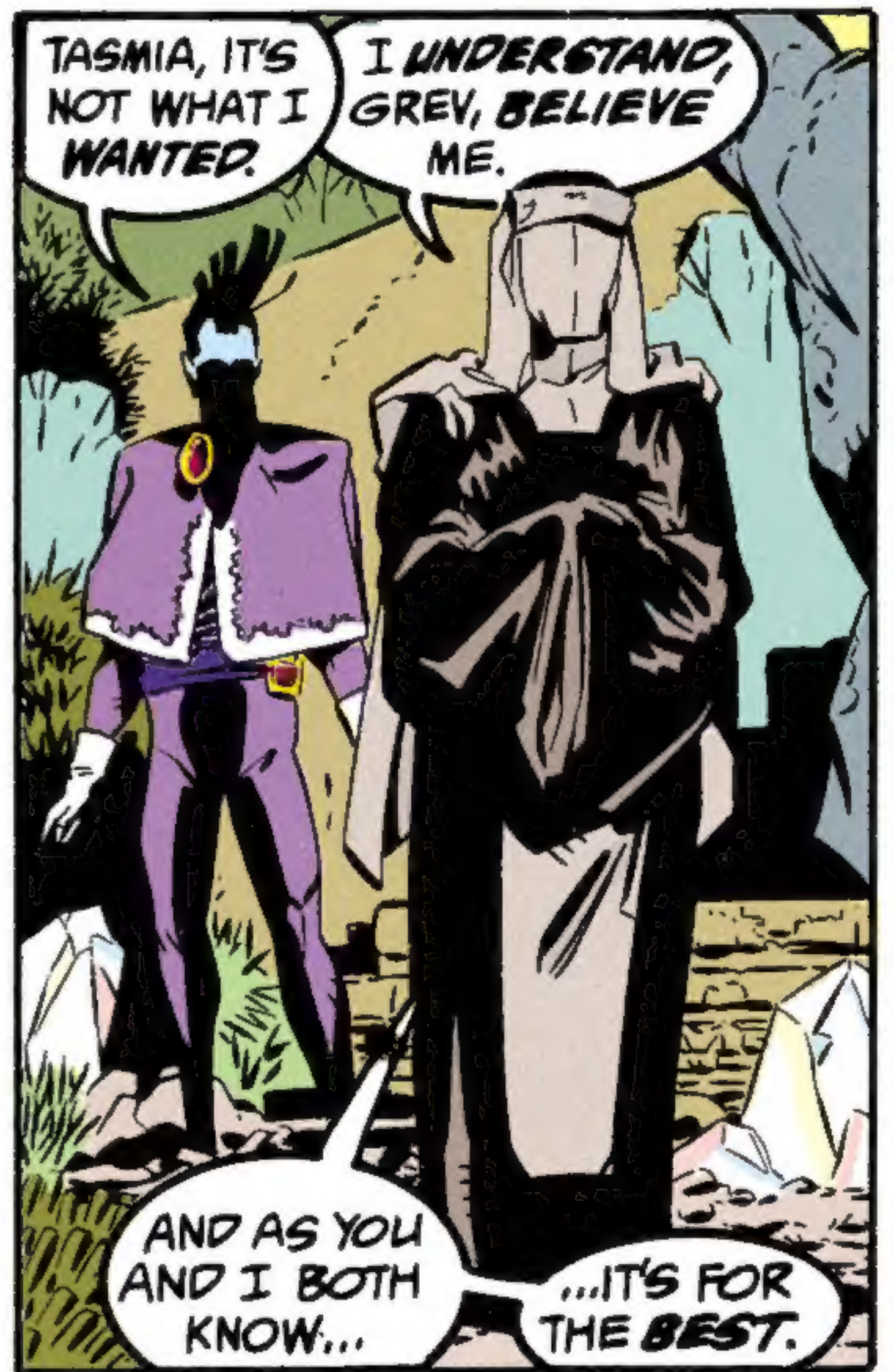
THE COUNCIL... THEY DECIDED THEY COULDN'T ...COULDN'T WAIT ANY LONGER. THEY'VE...



THEY'VE REMOVED ME AS PLANETARY PROTECTOR.

YES...

AND HAVE NAMED YOU TO REPLACE ME.



TASMIA, IT'S NOT WHAT I WANTED.

I UNDERSTAND, GREV, BELIEVE ME.

AND AS YOU AND I BOTH KNOW...

...IT'S FOR THE BEST.

SO MANY TIMES, SO CLOSE TO DEATH...

NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I PRAY FOR IT.

OH GOD, I'VE PRAYED FOR DEATH SO MANY TIMES.

YES, YOU HAVE. NOW I UNDERSTAND THAT.

YOU NEVER WERE PREPARED FOR MY MEMORIES -- MY SCARS. YOU COULDN'T BE.

A THOUSAND YEARS! COMPLETELY ALONE! MY GOD, JUST THE THOUGHT OF IT...

SURVIVING THE ORDEAL GAVE ME STRENGTH TO LIVE WITH THE MEMORIES. STRENGTH YOU COULDN'T HAVE HAD.

BAH! ENOUGH!

PATHETIC MORTAL CONCERNS. THIS VESSEL WILL NOT DIE.

YOU KNOW I'M RIGHT. FOR A MILLENNIUM, YOU COWERED FROM THE SPECTRE OF LEAD POISONING. NOW IT SUITS MY NEEDS TO ERADICATE THAT VULNERABILITY IN THIS BODY.

AND LIKE THAT, IT IS DONE.

AT LAST YOU'RE FREE. TRULY INVULNERABLE.

FINALLY YOU'LL PLAY THE ROLE FOR WHICH YOU WERE CREATED.

P-PLEASE, FATHER. HAVEN'T WE SUFFERED ENOUGH?

BY GOD, TRAPPER, I SWEAR. THIS TIME YOU WILL NOT WIN.

AH, TALOK VIII! OF COURSE YOU'D RUN HERE FIRST.

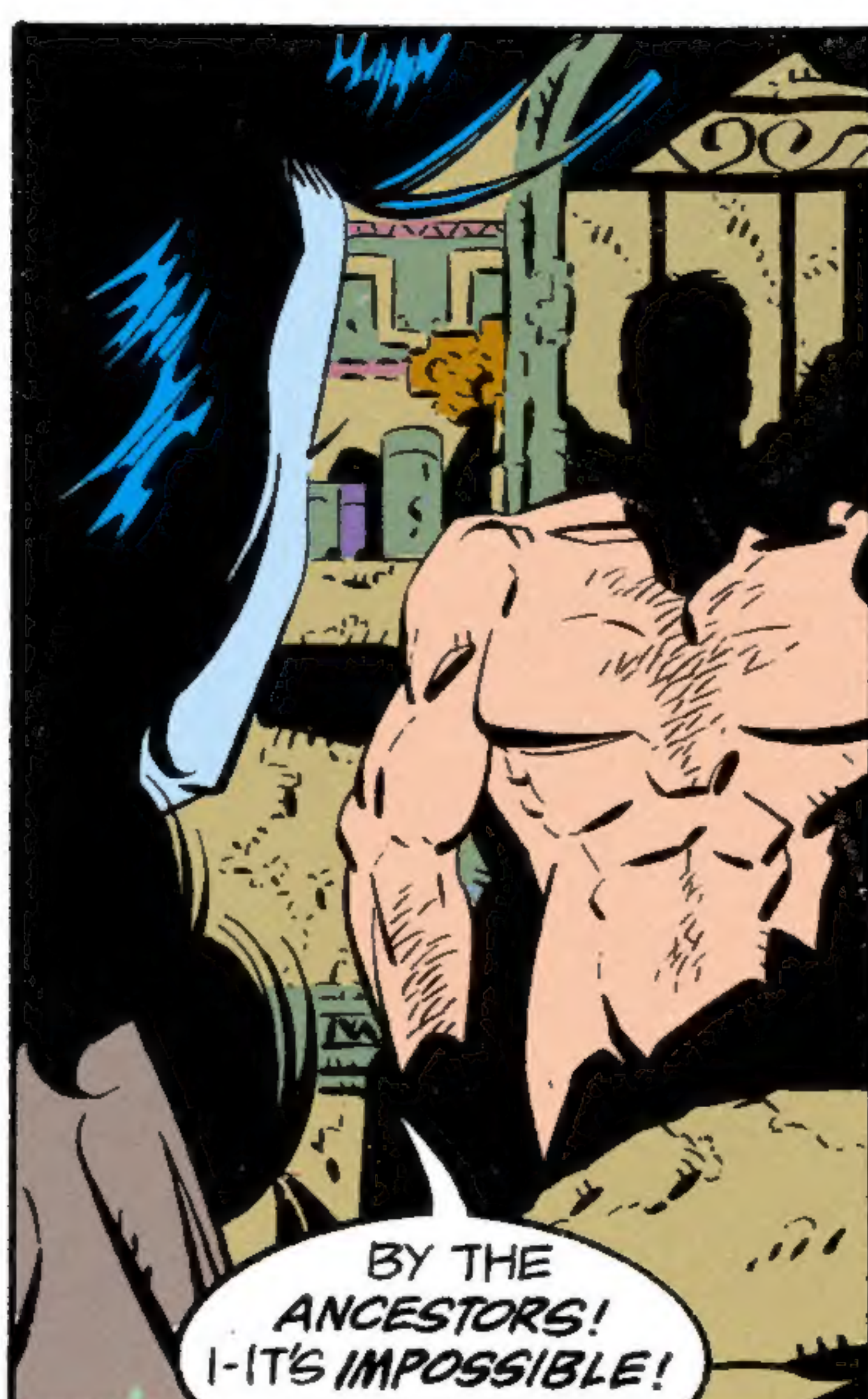
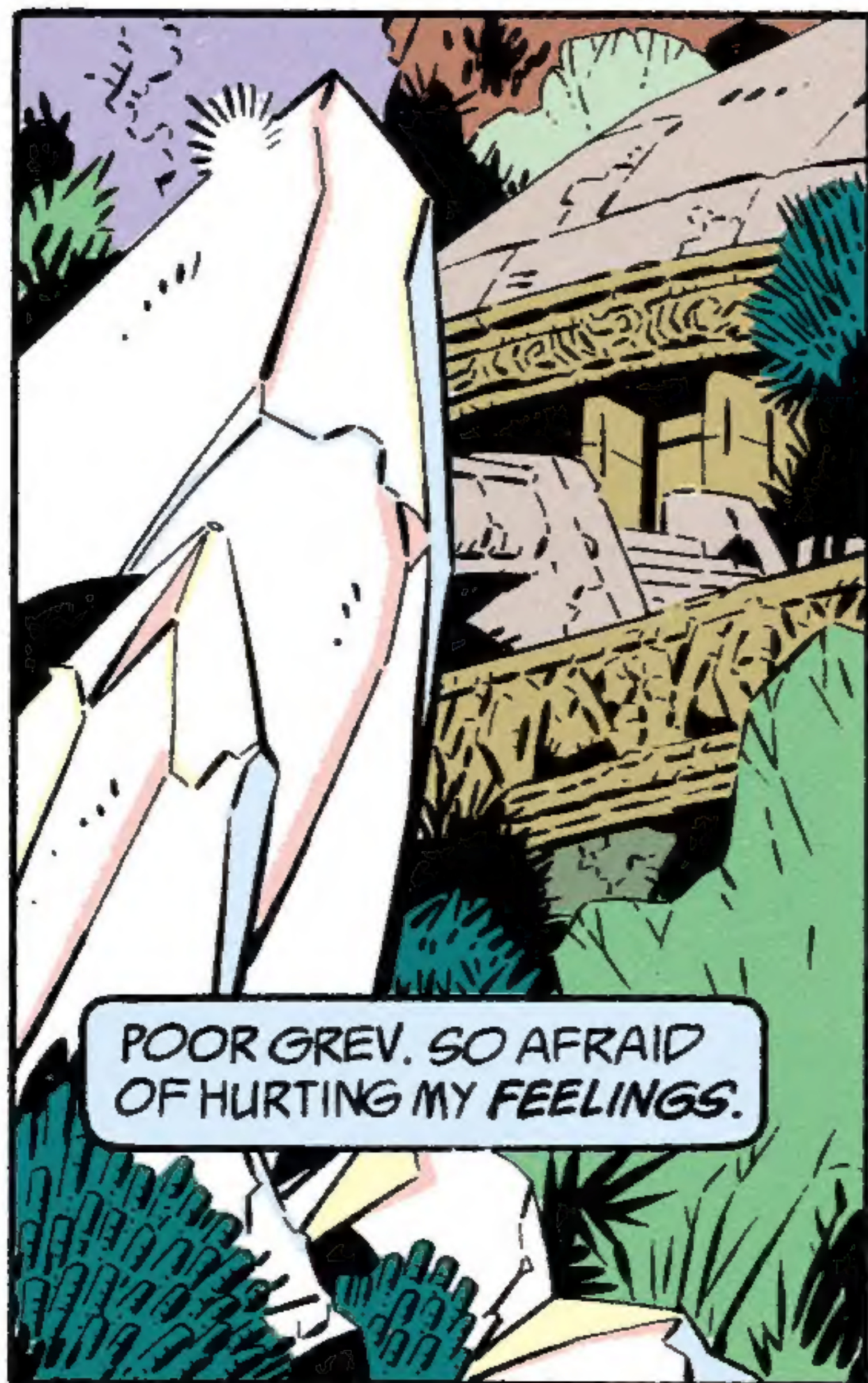
TALOK VIII! MY GOD, I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN FACE HER.

DAMN IT, IF THERE'S ONE PERSON WE'RE GOING TO FACE BEFORE THE END, IT'S HER.

SENTIMENTAL FOOL. SHE'LL BE OF NO HELP TO YOU.

I'VE -- WE'VE -- LET HER DOWN IN THE PAST... BUT NEVER AGAIN.

I DON'T CARE WHAT THE COST, WE WILL NOT LET THAT WOMAN DOWN AGAIN.



M-MON!
HOW...?

JUST
HOLD ME.

OH, MON, MON!
IT'S BEEN **TERRIBLE**
WITHOUT YOU.

BY THE STARS!
WHY MUST THEY
TOUCH?!

SHE'S A
GOOD
WOMAN.

OH, DON'T CRY,
SHADY... PLEASE...

ANCESTORS! *>sniff<*
IT'S **REALLY** YOU.

YES, SHADY,
IT'S **REALLY** ME.

WHEN I'VE TAKEN
FULL CONTROL, I
WILL NOT **TOLERATE**
THE TOUCH OF HUMAN
FLESH. **REVOLTING!**

SHE'S ENDURED
SO MUCH.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
HOW...

IT'S THE
TIME TRAPPER,
SHADY.

PLEASE, CAN'T YOU
HAVE MERCY, FATHER?
FOR **HER** SAKE...

YOU **INSECTS** THINK
YOUR LIVES AND YOUR
EMOTIONS ARE **SO**
IMPORTANT.

HOW **CHILDISHLY** SELF-
CENTERED. A **UNIVERSE** TO
BE CONQUERED, AND YOU
WORRY ABOUT YOUR PUNY LIVES.

OH NO!

ALL ALONG,
I'VE BEEN ONE OF
HIS **PUPPETS.**

WHAT'S THIS? THE
PATHETIC LITTLE MORTAL
UNDERSTANDS! HIS
MIND IS REGAINING
COHERENCE AT A
SURPRISING RATE.

HE'S KEPT ME AROUND
AS HIS **ESCAPE** HATCH.
WE **THOUGHT** WE'D **KILLED**
HIM. BUT HE LEFT A LITTLE
SPARK OF HIMSELF
IN **ME.**

I SUPPOSE I MUST
OBLITERATE HIS
ESSENCE SOONER
THAN I'D EXPECTED.

BUT WHY? WHY
DO YOU HAVE TO
KILL EVERYONE?

HE **COULDN'T**
LET MY BODY DIE.
WHAT'S **LEFT** OF
HIM IS IN **ME.**

OH GODS!

THOSE WHO SERVE
ME **MAY** SURVIVE.
AND YOU, MY SON,
HAVE SERVED ME.

HOW-HOW DID
I SERVE **YOU**?

SO I'M AFRAID WE
DON'T HAVE **TIME** TO
GET REACQUAINTED. EVERY
SECOND WE LOSE COULD
BE **CRITICAL.** I'M
REALLY **SORRY.**

AH, YOU WERE THE WEDGE
THAT **WEAKENED** MON-EL.
THE DOUBTS, THE PHOBIAS,
THE FATAL THIRST FOR
VENGEANCE.

BEFORE **YOU,** I FEARED
MY INSTRUMENT HAD
BECOME STRONG ENOUGH
TO **RESIST** ME.

HEY, LOVE, IT'S
SHADY YOU'RE TALKING
TO. SO WHAT DO WE DO
FIRST?

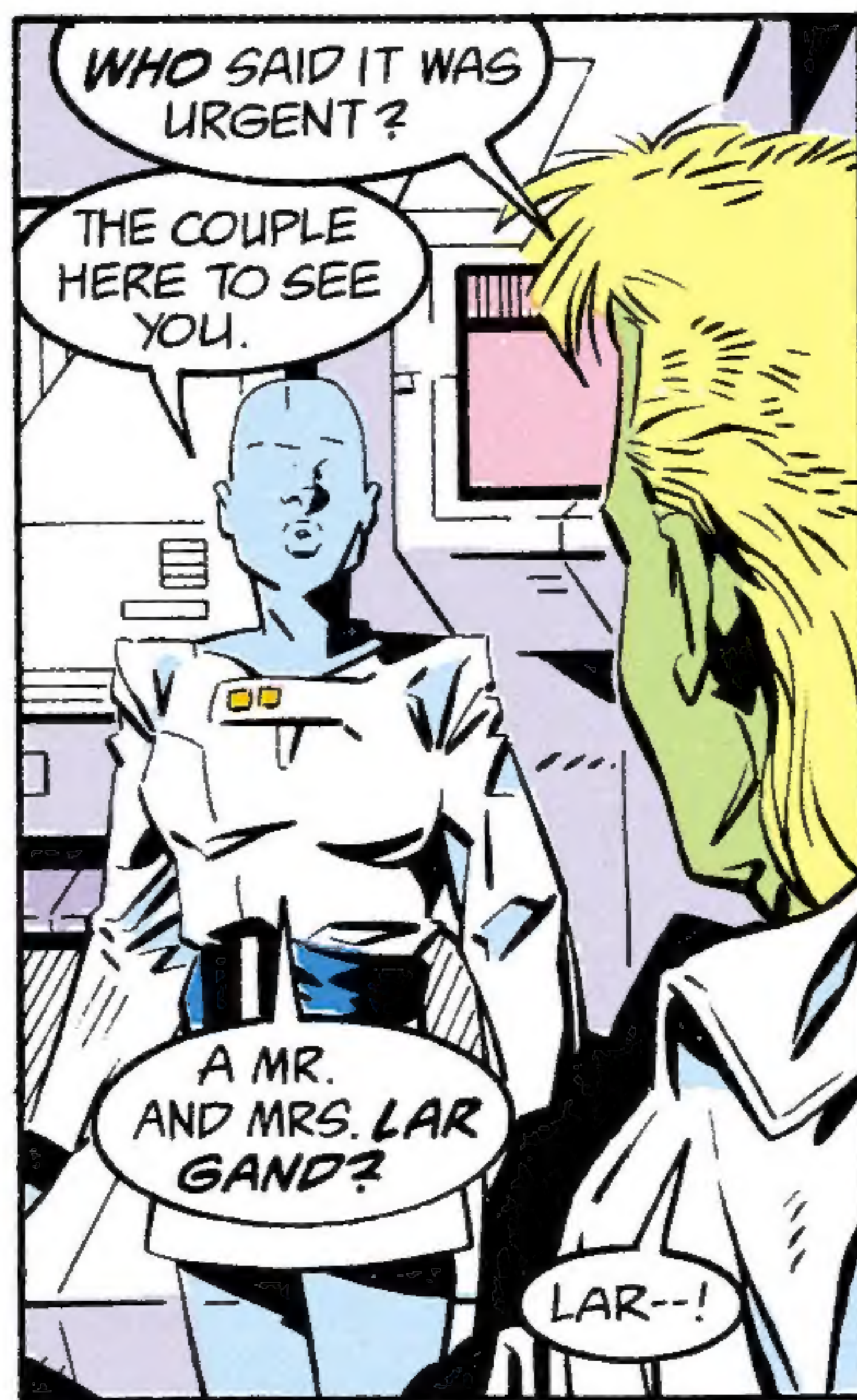
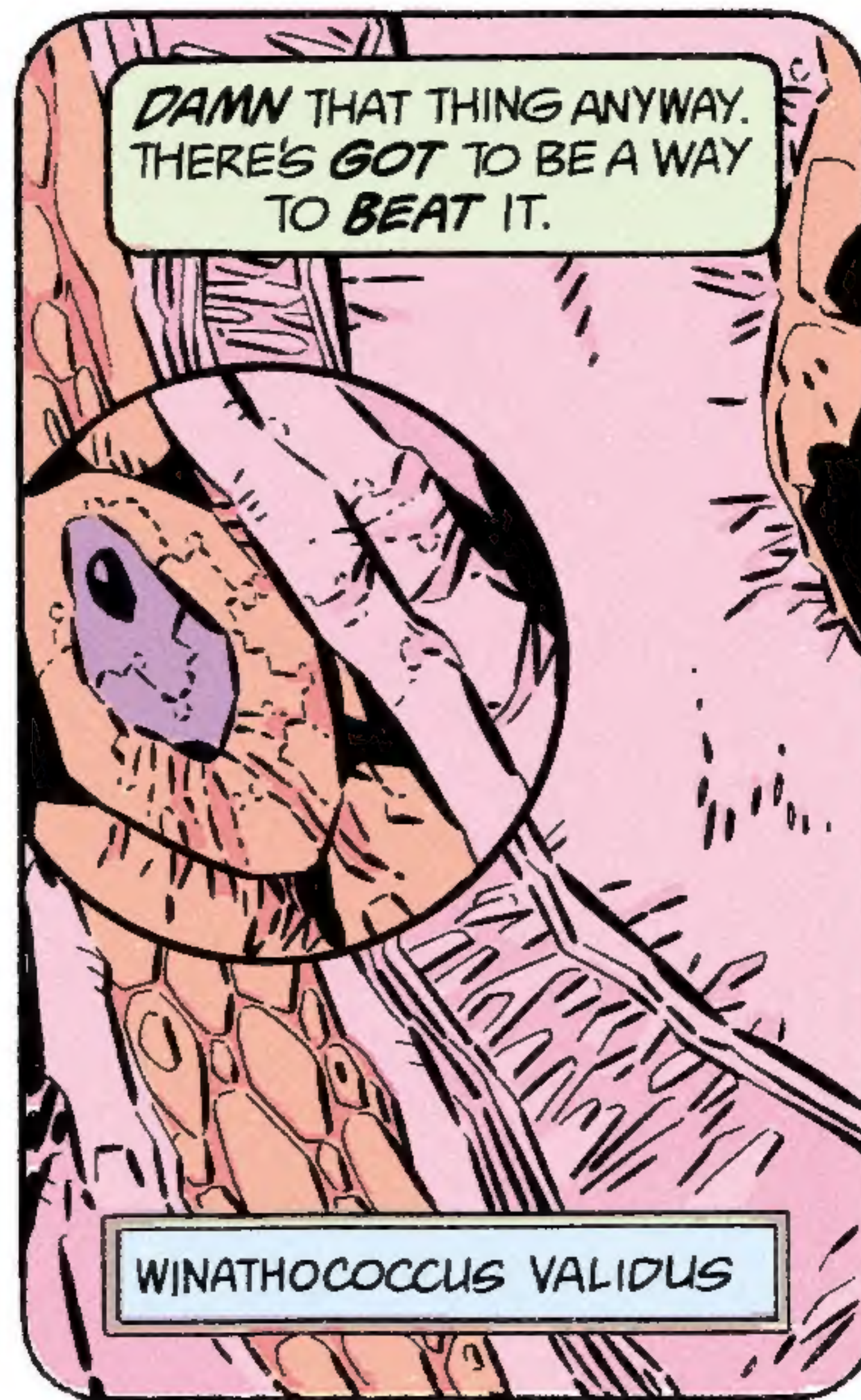
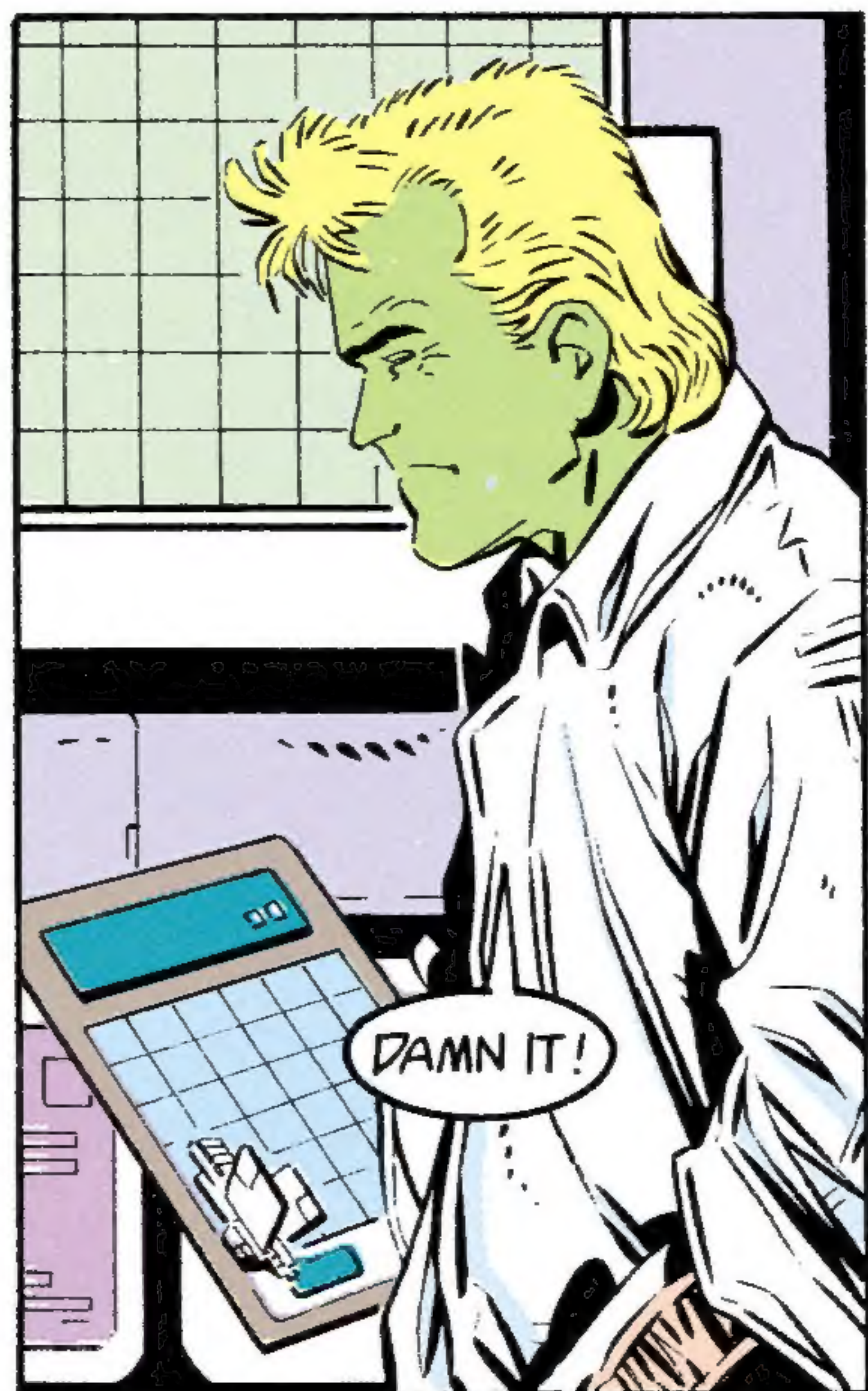
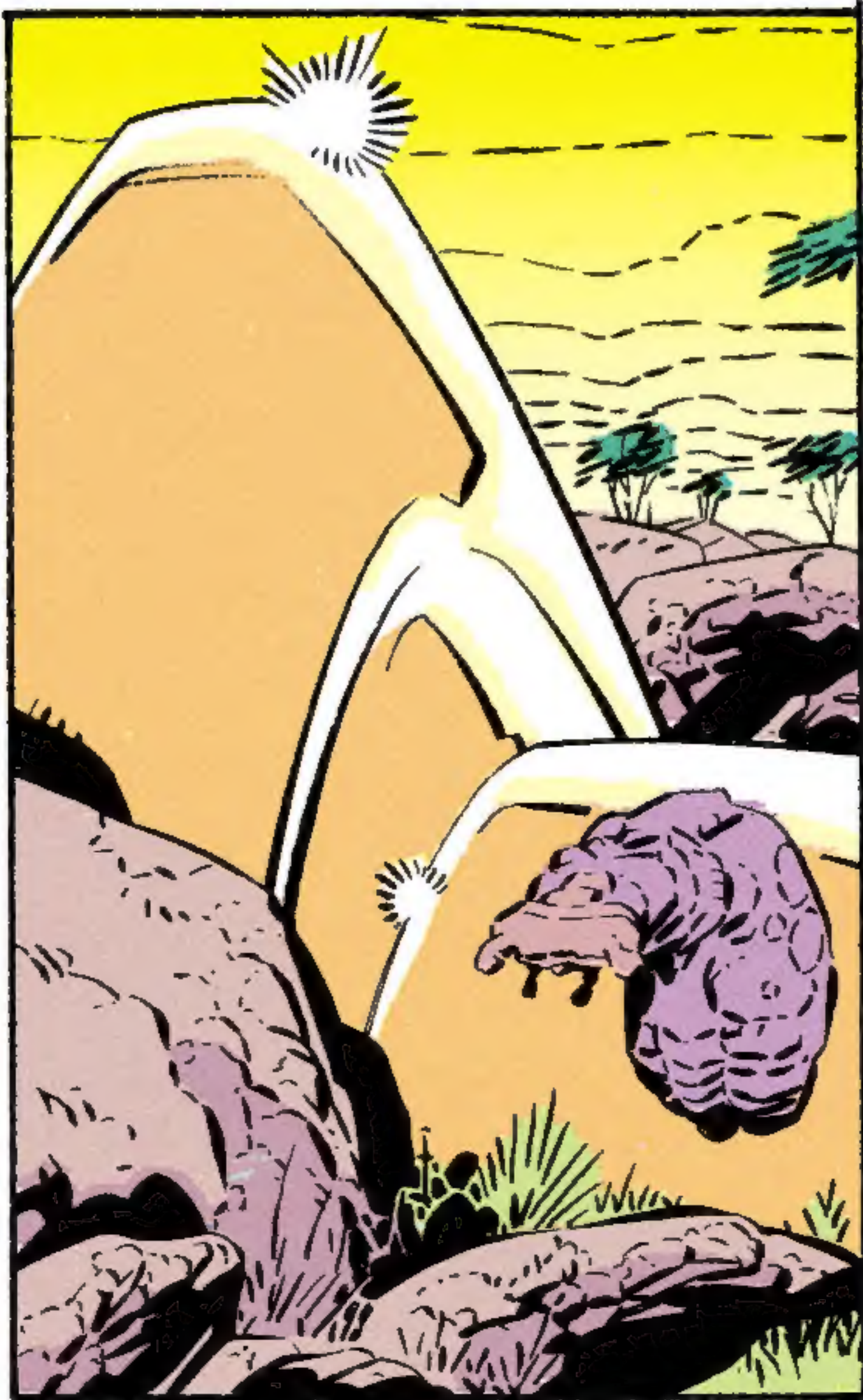
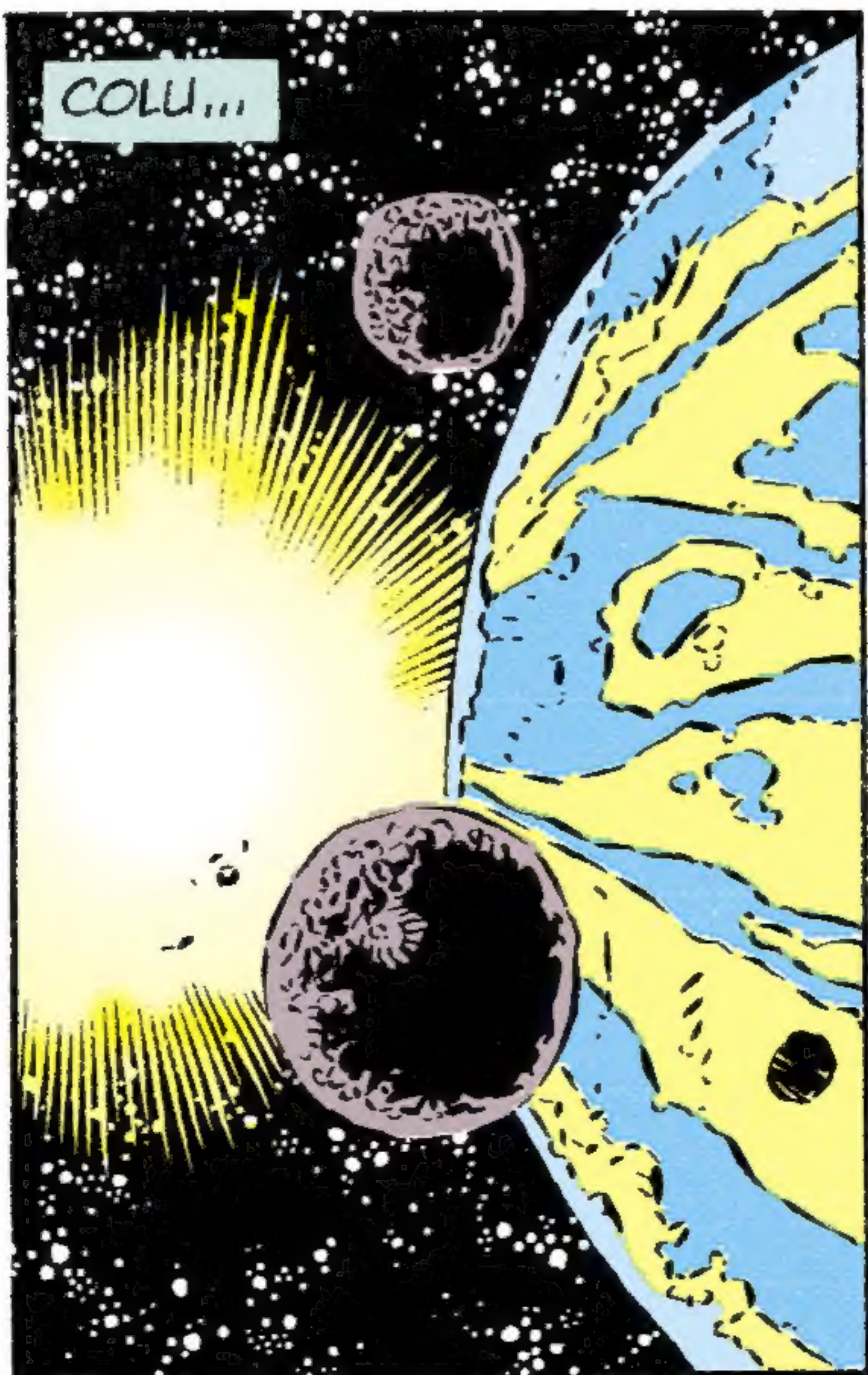
WELL, THERE'S
ONLY **ONE** PERSON
WHO COULD **POSSIBLY**
SORT **THIS** ONE
OUT...

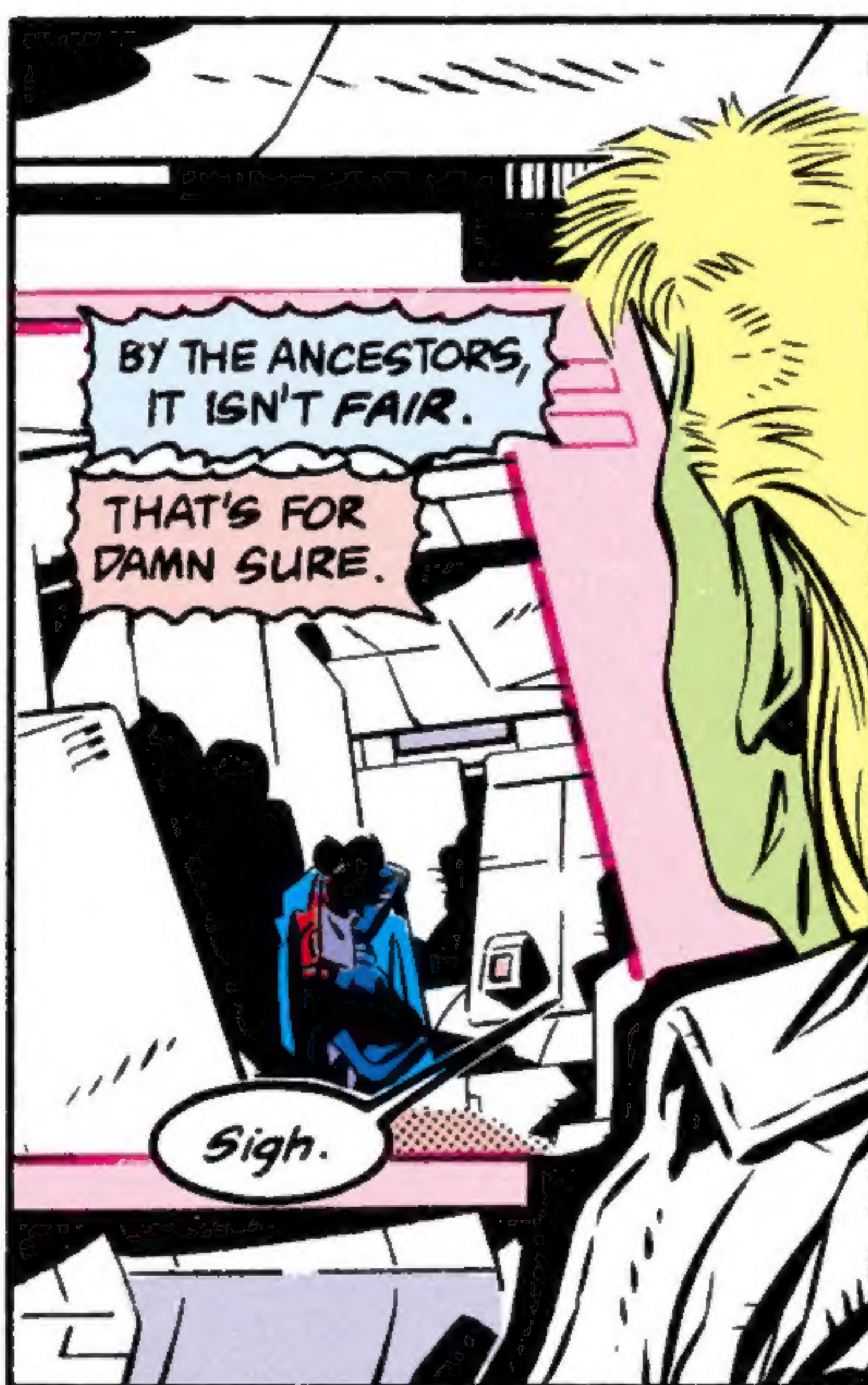
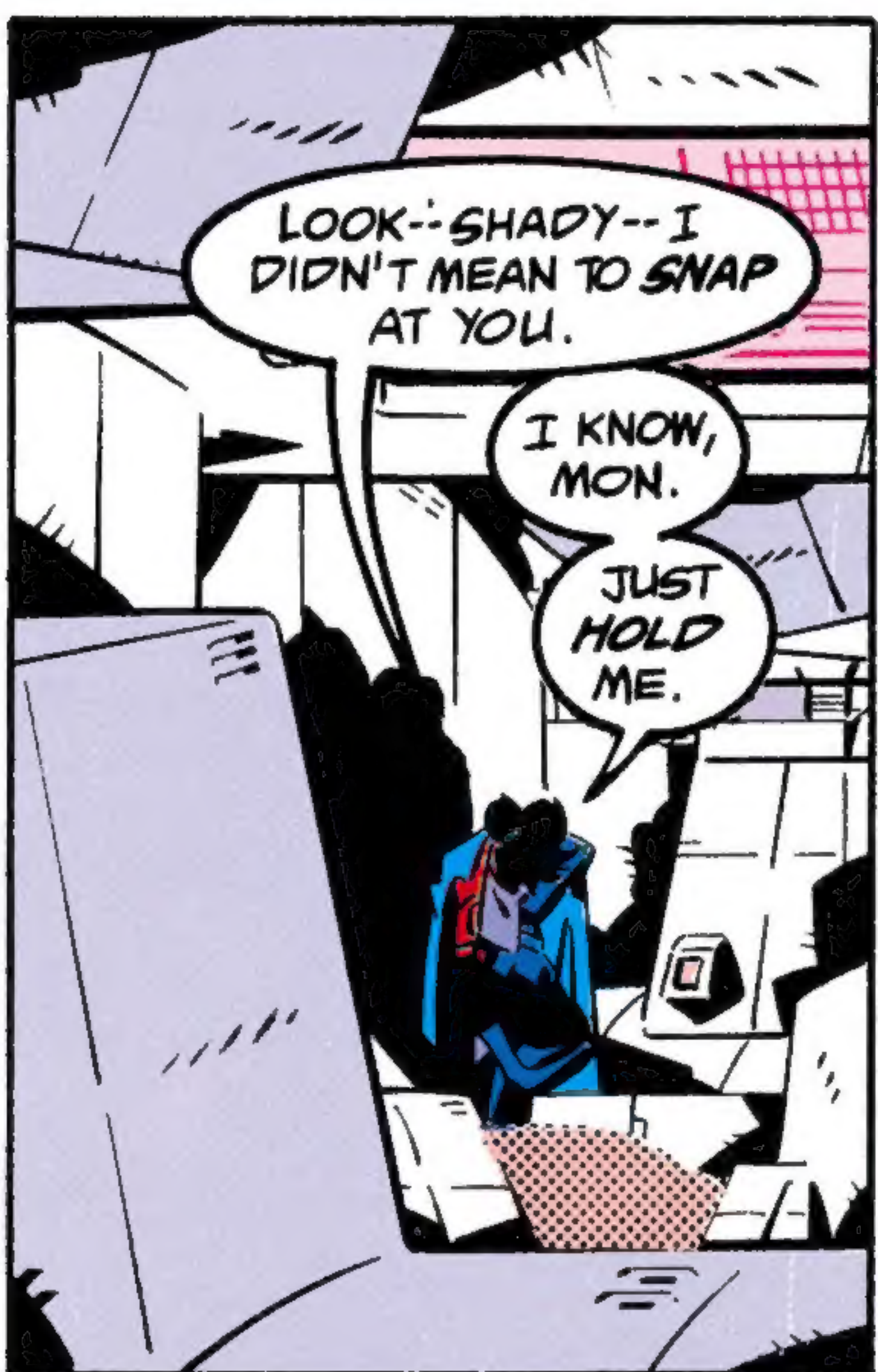
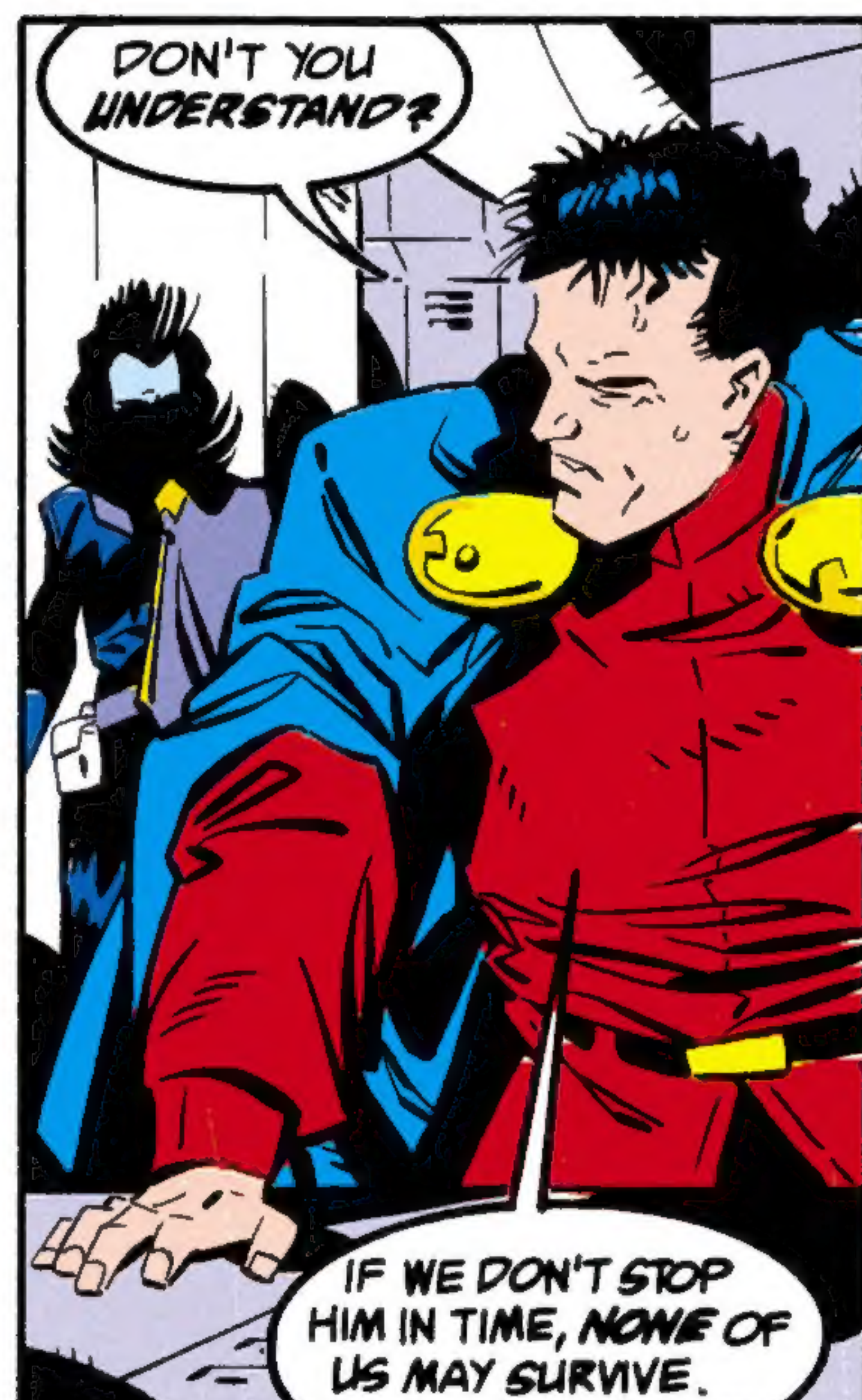
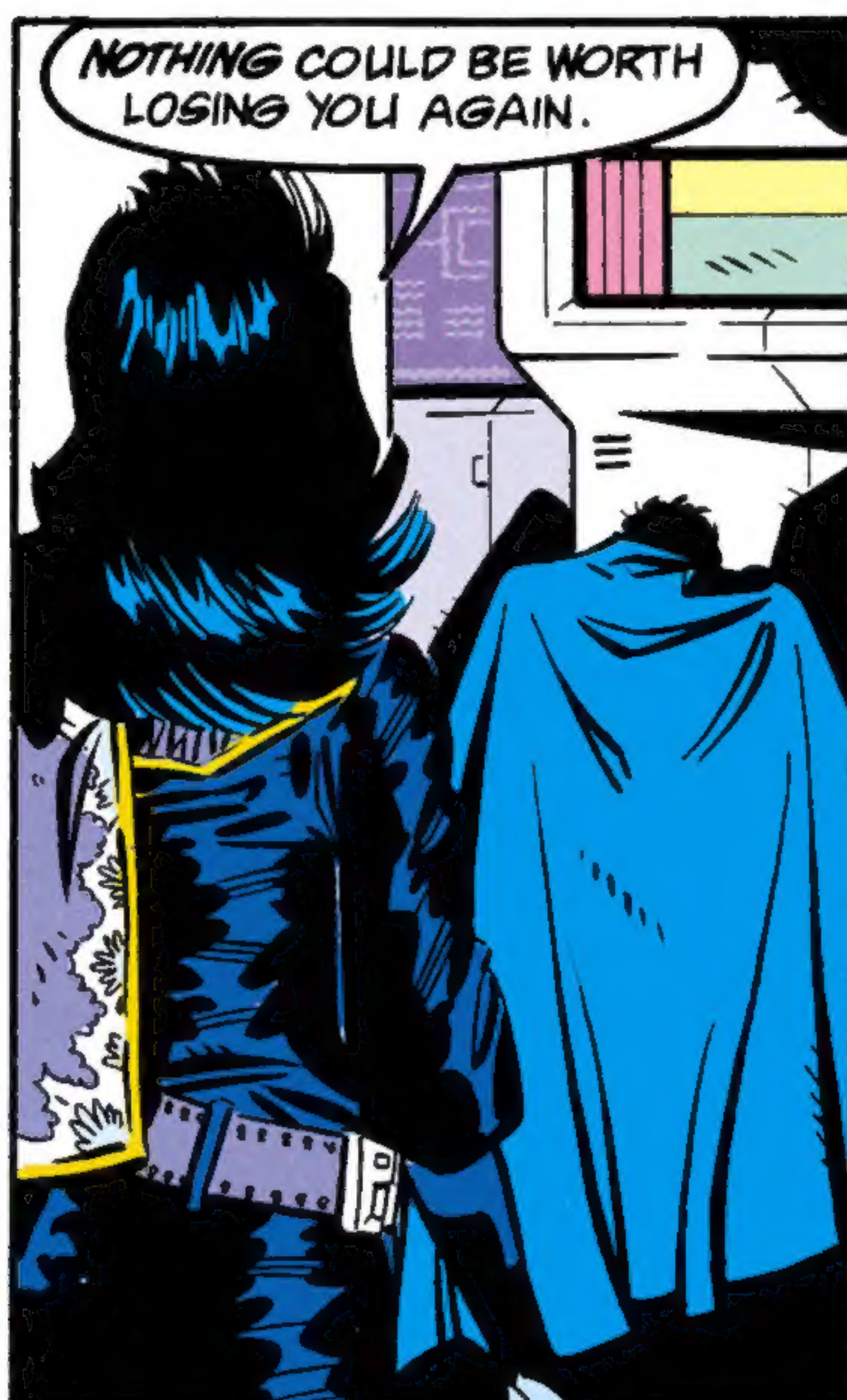
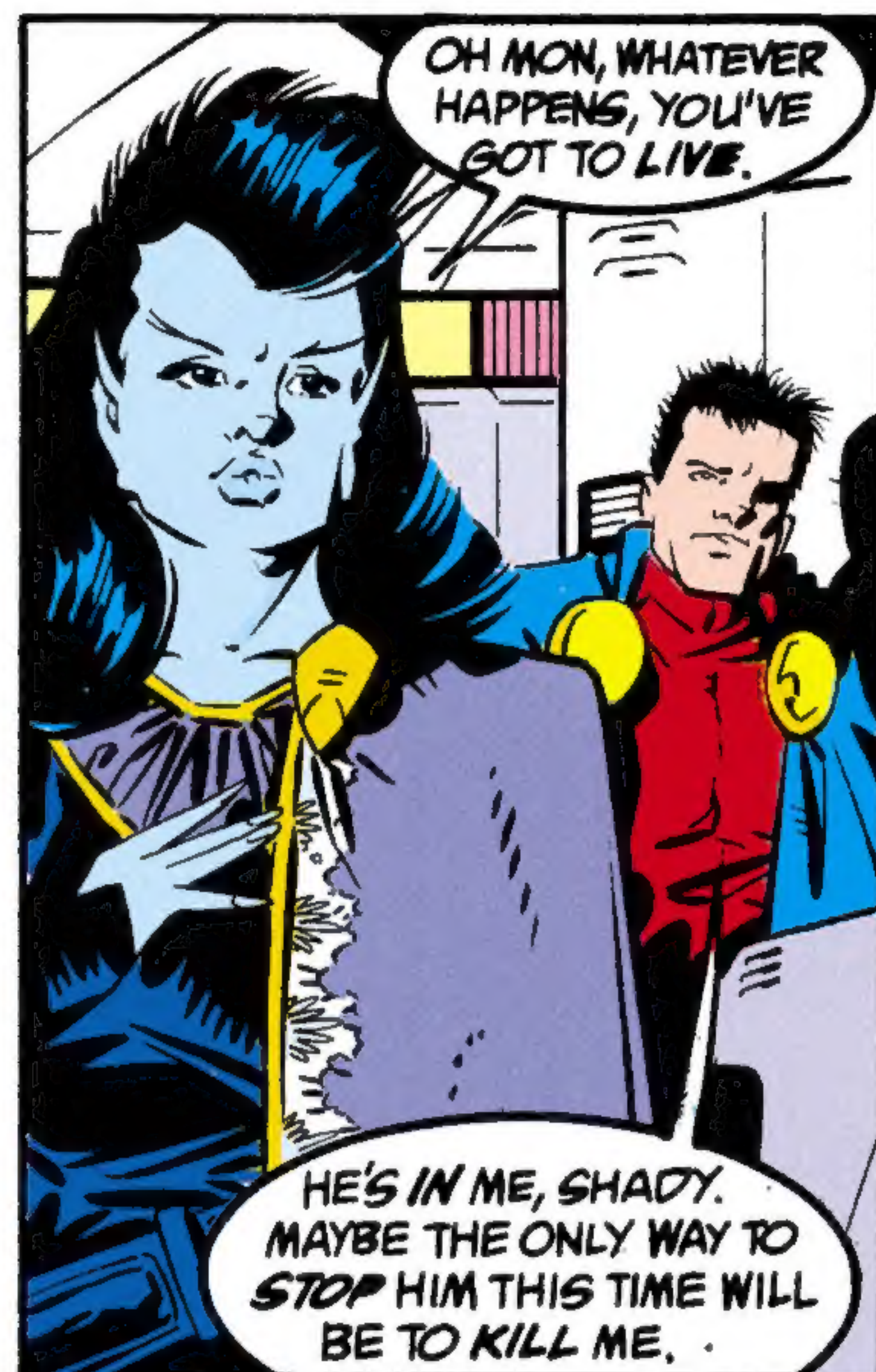
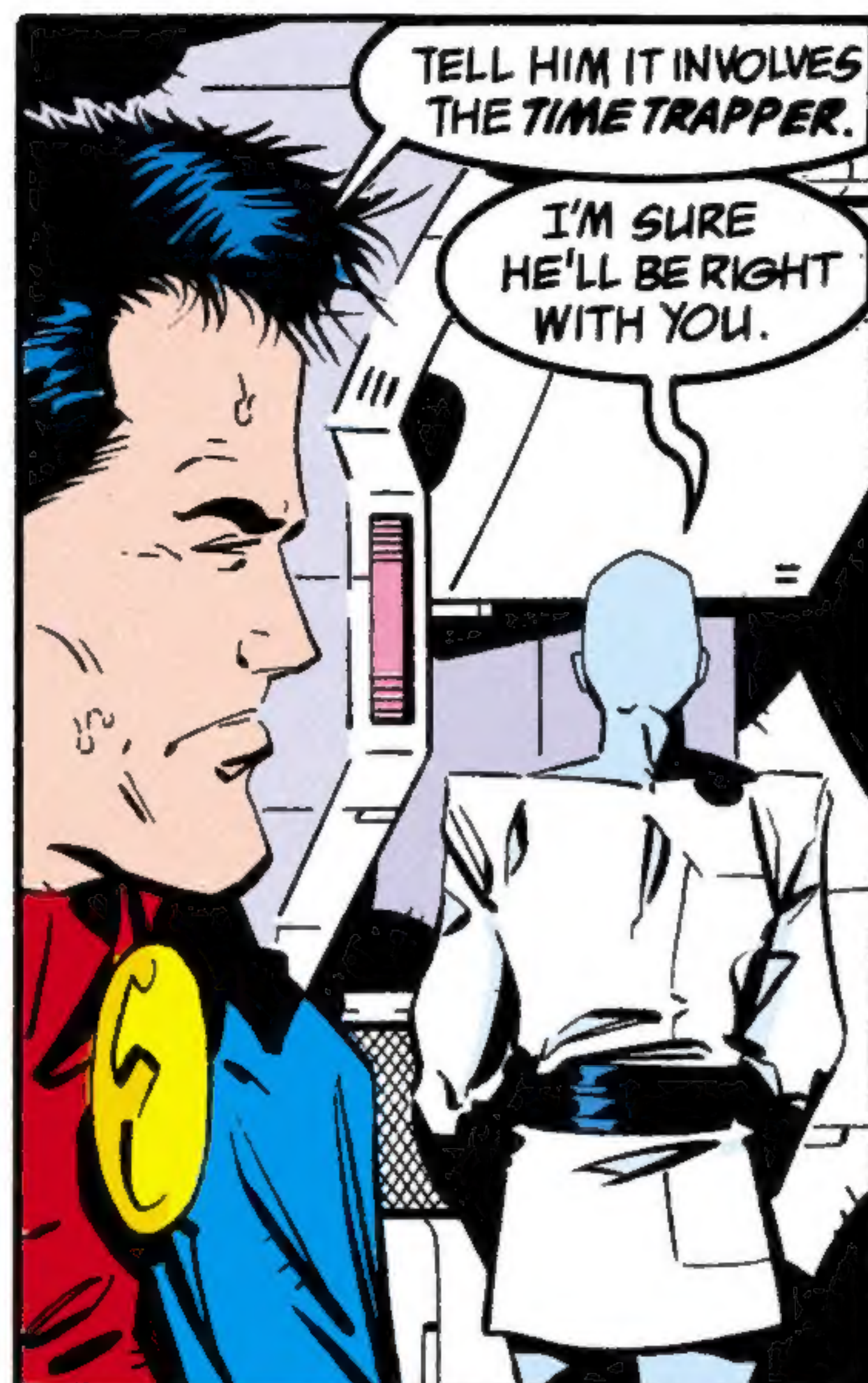
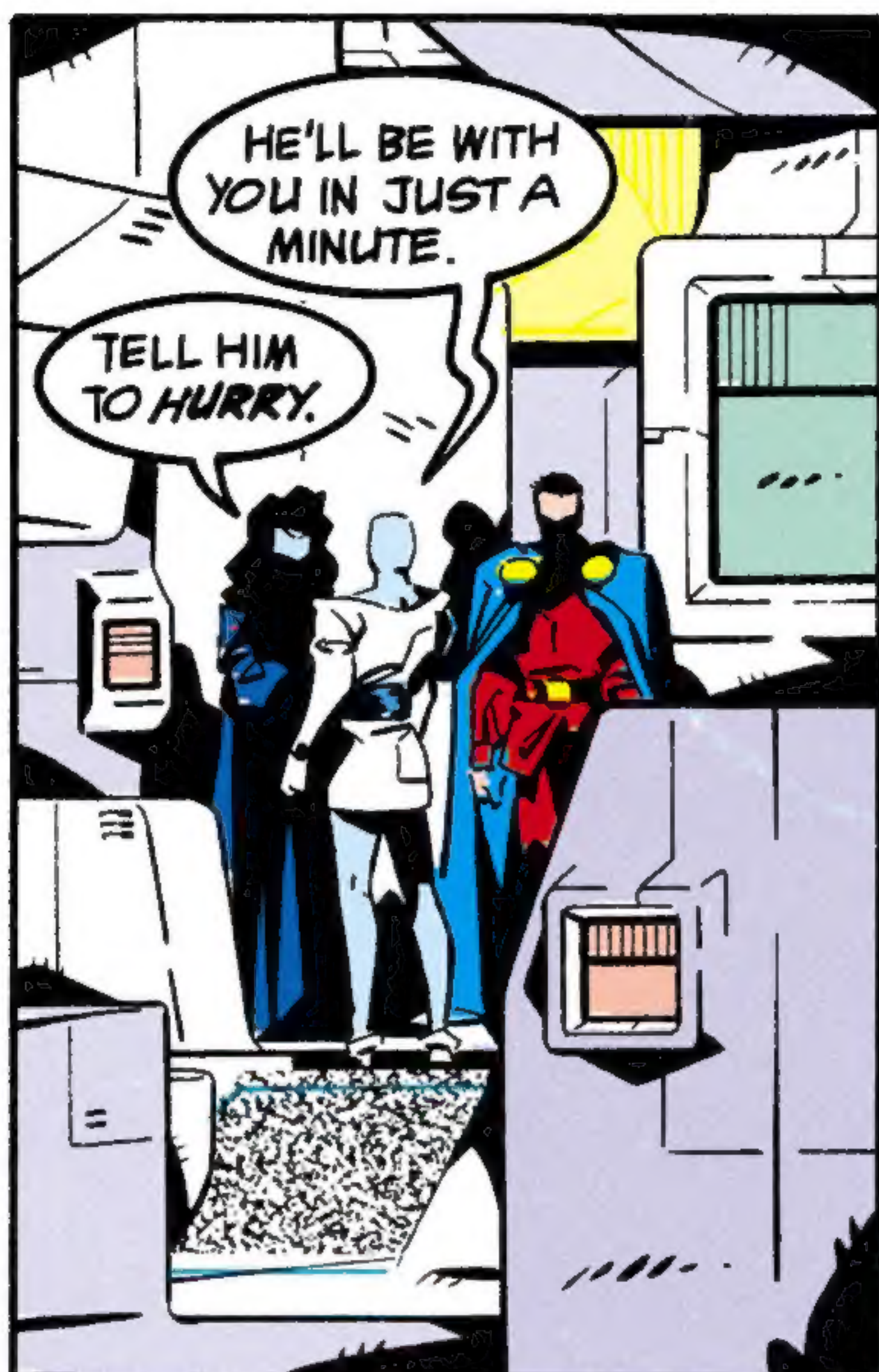
AND NOW YOUR UNION
IS SHATTERED. HIS INNER
RESOLVE **RETURNS.** BUT
TOO LATE TO MAKE ANY
DIFFERENCE.

BRAINY!

LET'S GO,
SHADY!

AT LAST! I
THOUGHT THEY'D
NEVER GET ON
WITH IT!







FATHER, PLEASE, NOT THIS MEMORY.

...DREAM GIRL FORESAW... MON-EL DESTINED TO DIE TODAY...

AH, THE DAY THE FATES PLACED THE FATAL WEDGE IN MON-EL'S MIND...



...NO HE BEAT BACK THE THREAT!... MON-EL SURVIVED!

...NOT MON-EL... I'M ELTRO GAND... MON-EL'S DESCENDANT...

PLEASE, FATHER...



...TO SAVE MON... OVER-POWERED HIM, DRUGGED HIM... TOOK HIS PLACE...

...THE PROPHECY WAS FOILED...



...LEFT HIM ON THIS ASTEROID IN THE POSVAR BELT...

SO STUPID! WHY DID I EVER INTERFERE?



...WAIT... NO PULSE... NO BREATHING...

...LEAD POISONING... FATAL...

NO! NO! NO!



...PROTECTIVE SERUM WORE OFF... MY FAULT...

...MON-EL'S DEAD... I MADE THE PROPHECY COME TRUE.

STOP IT, FATHER!



HA! PATHETIC MORTALS! HE WASN'T DEAD!

WITH HIS POWERS, LIFE REMAINED LONG AFTER A DETECTABLE PULSE.

...ELTRO... NO!...

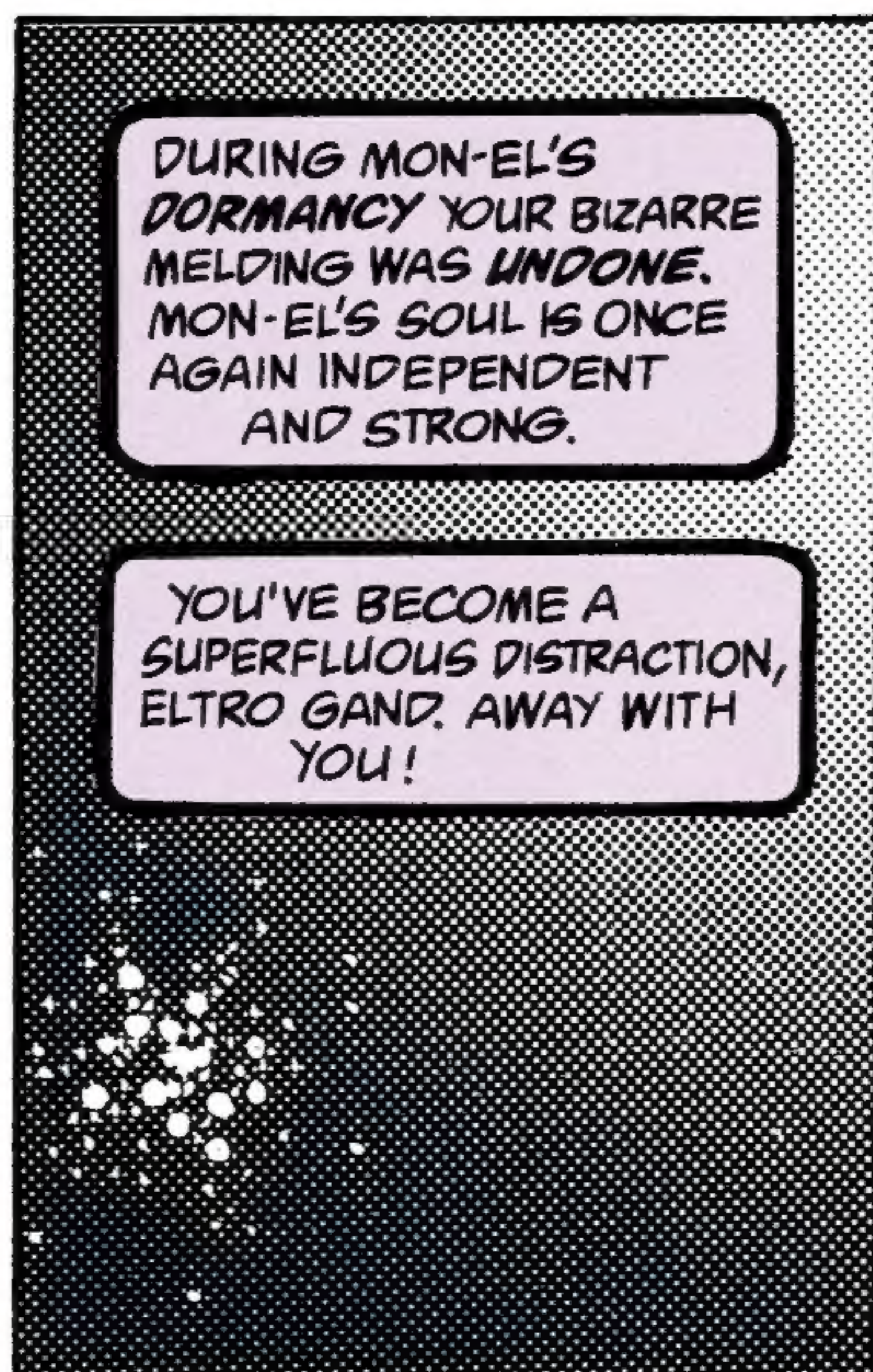
...THIS MACHINE... SACRIFICE MY LIFE SO MON-EL CAN LIVE...



YOU MEANT TO SAVE HIM, AND ALL YOU DID WAS PROJECT YOUR WEAK SOUL INTO HIS.

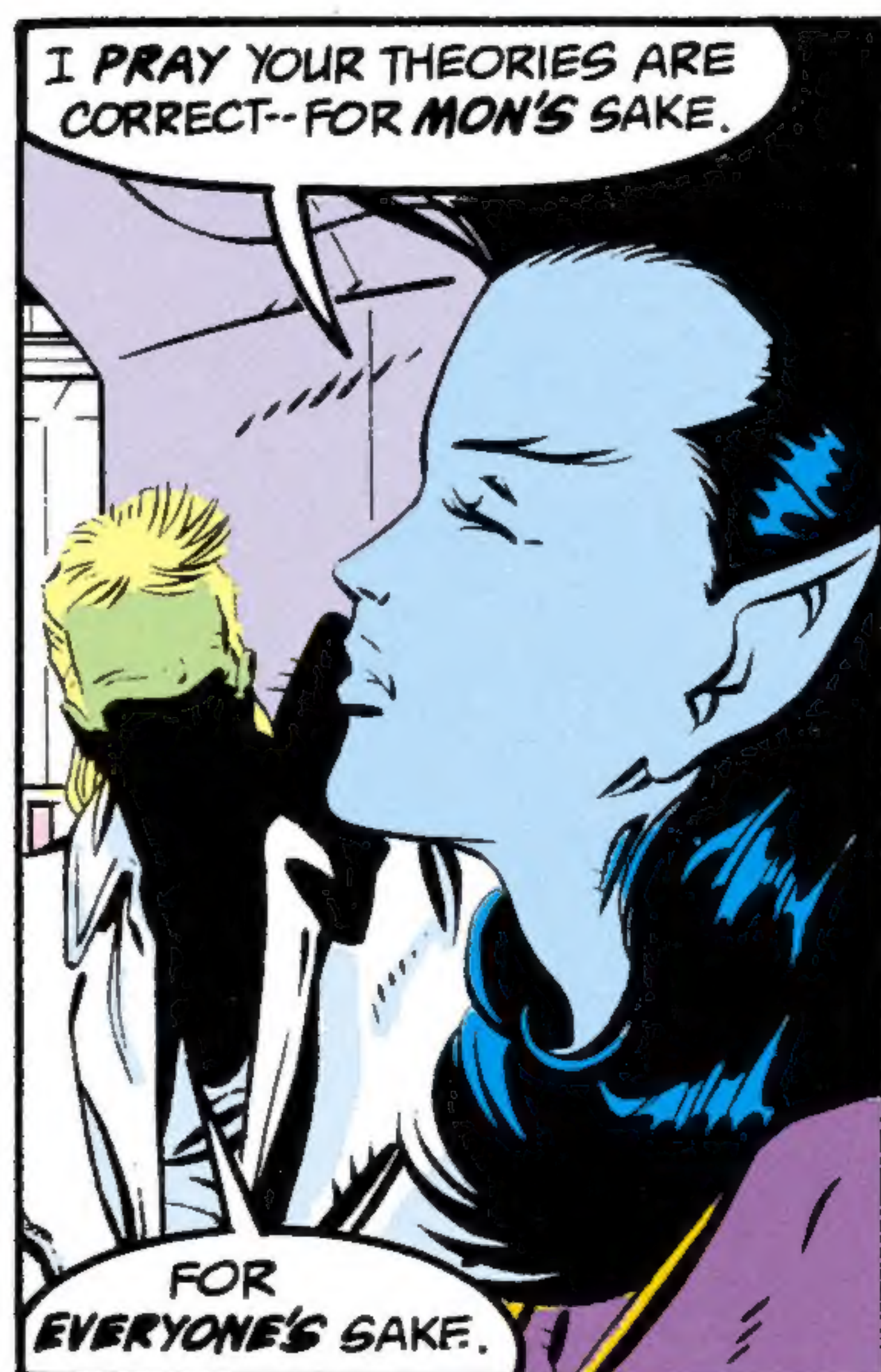
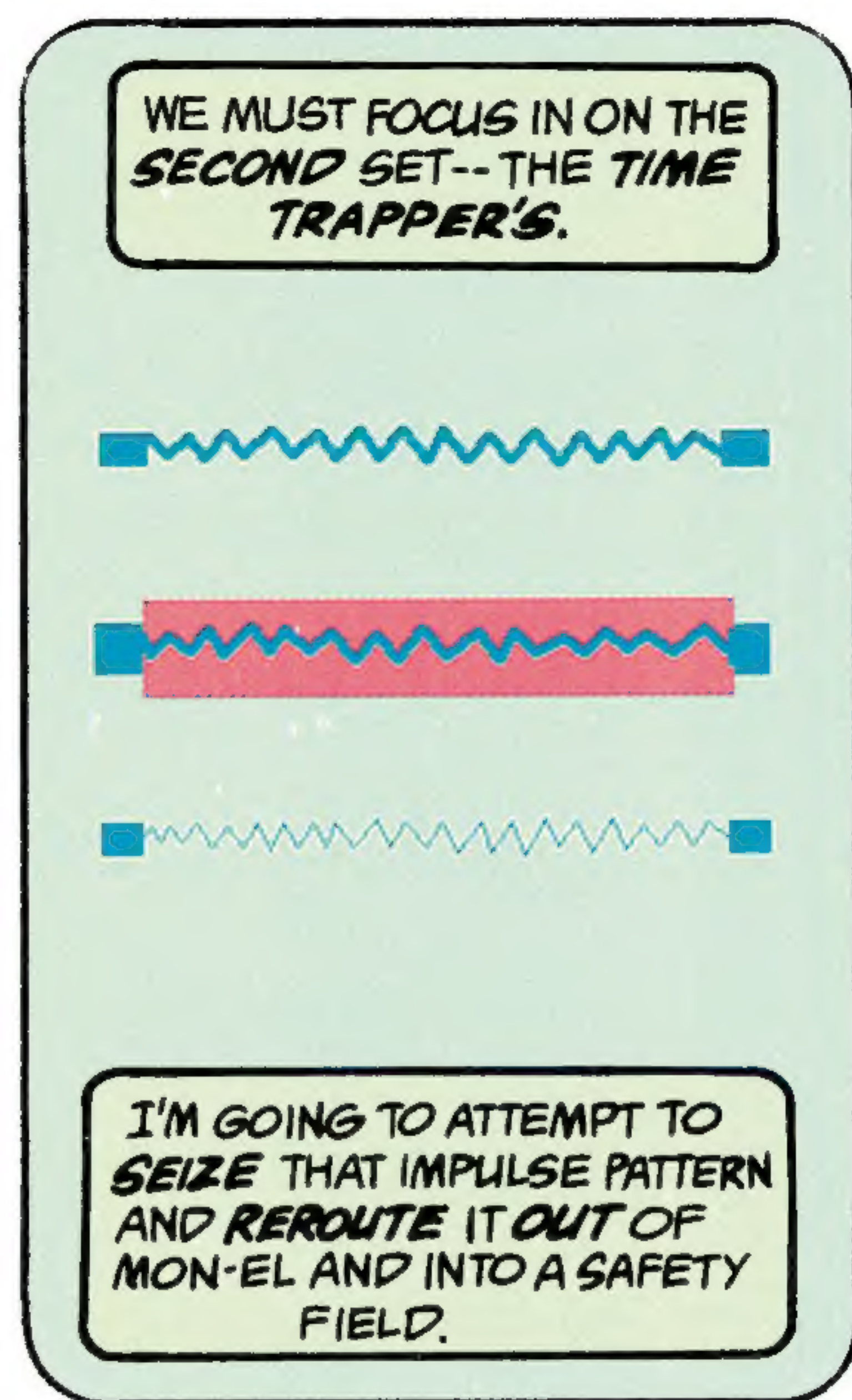
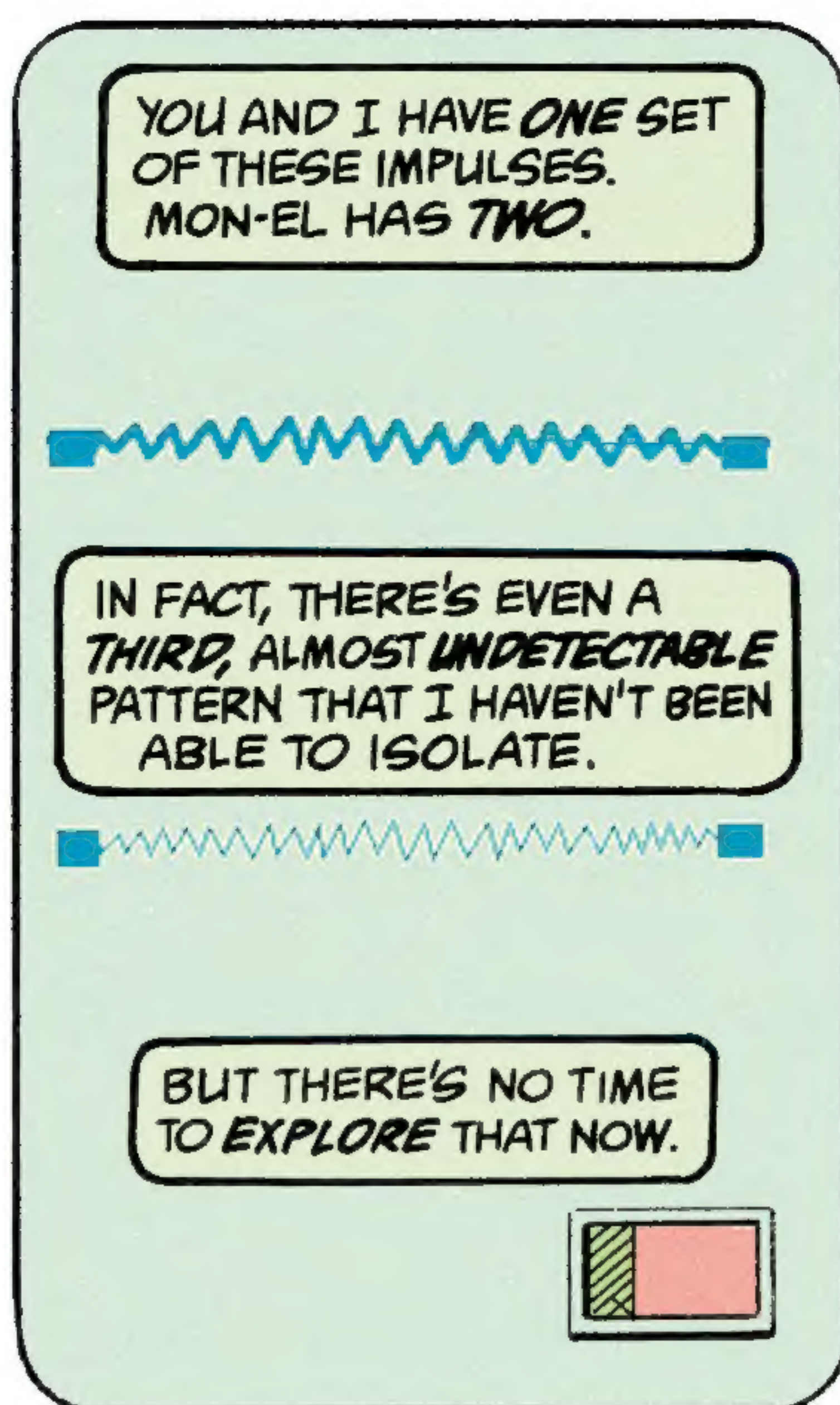
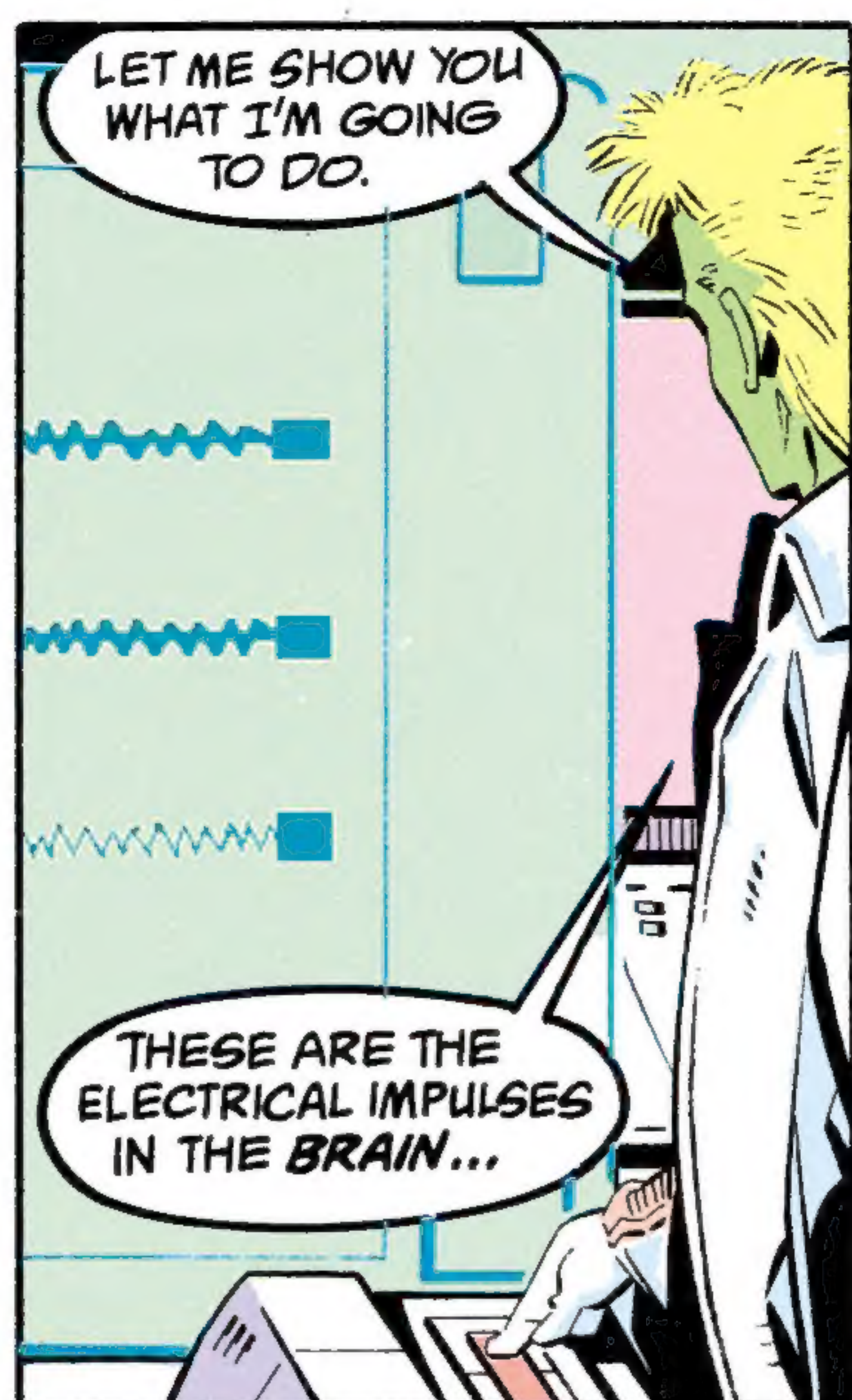
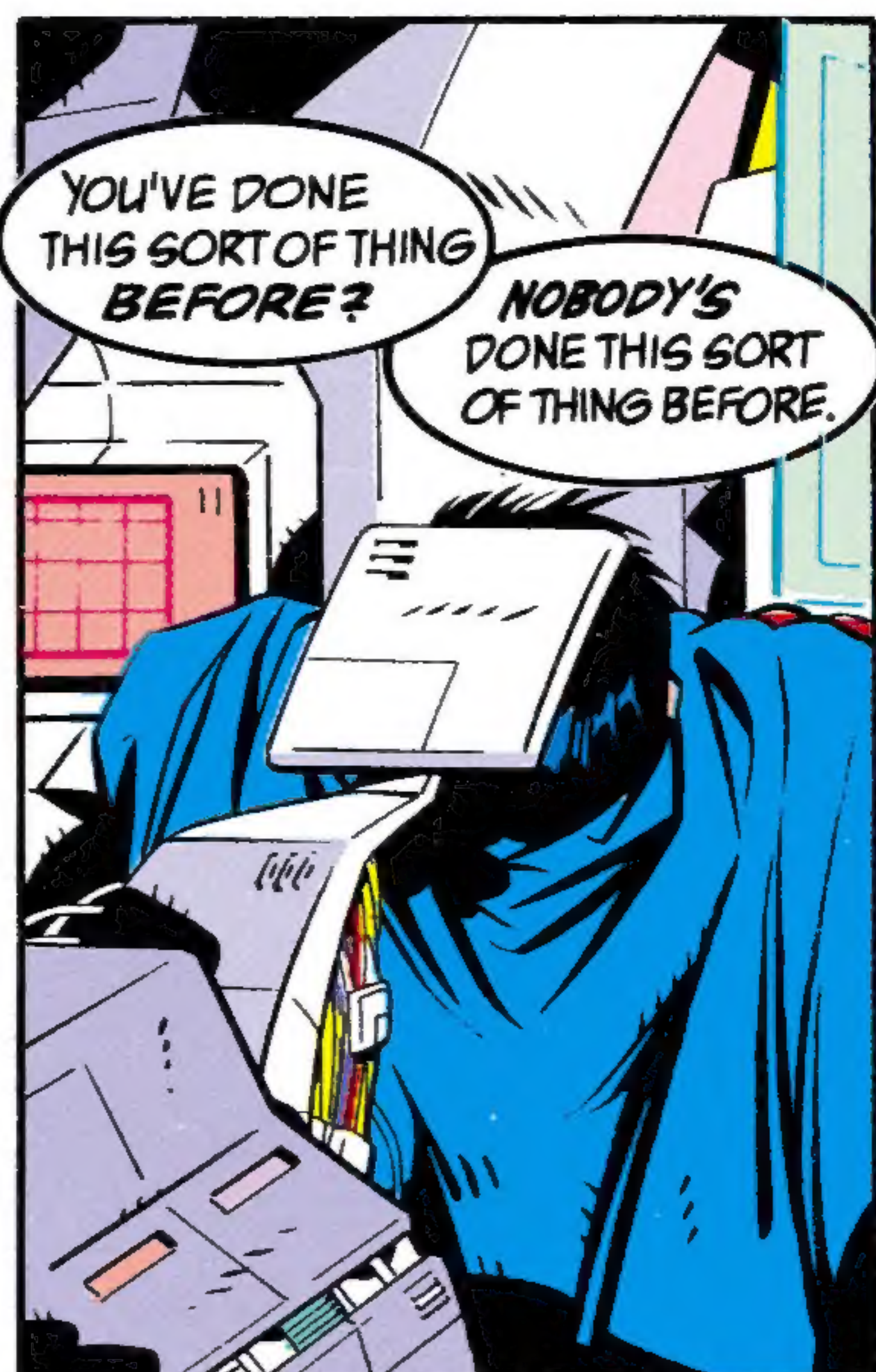
STOP IT! STOP TORTURING ME WITH THIS!

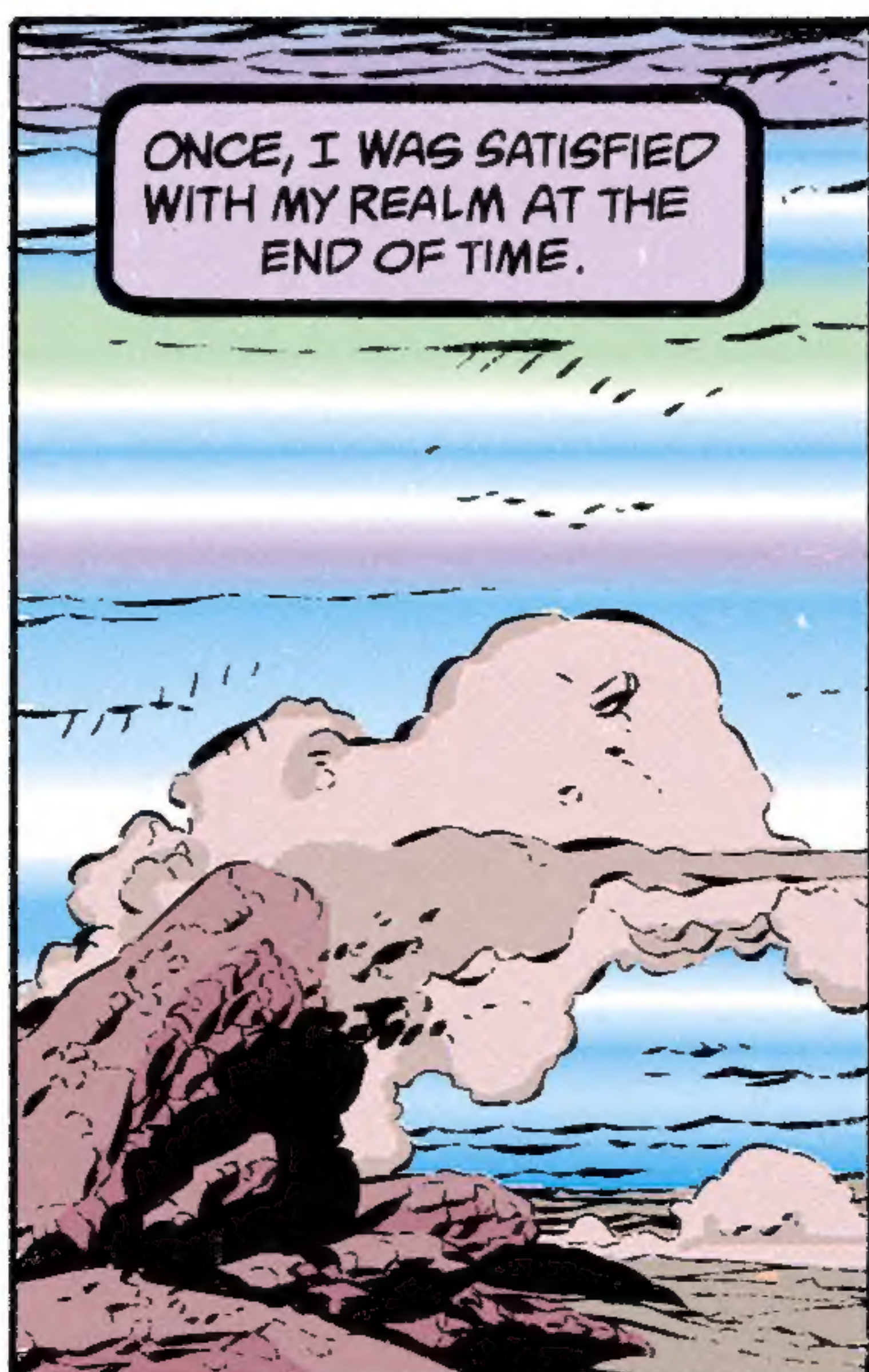
AS YOU WISH.



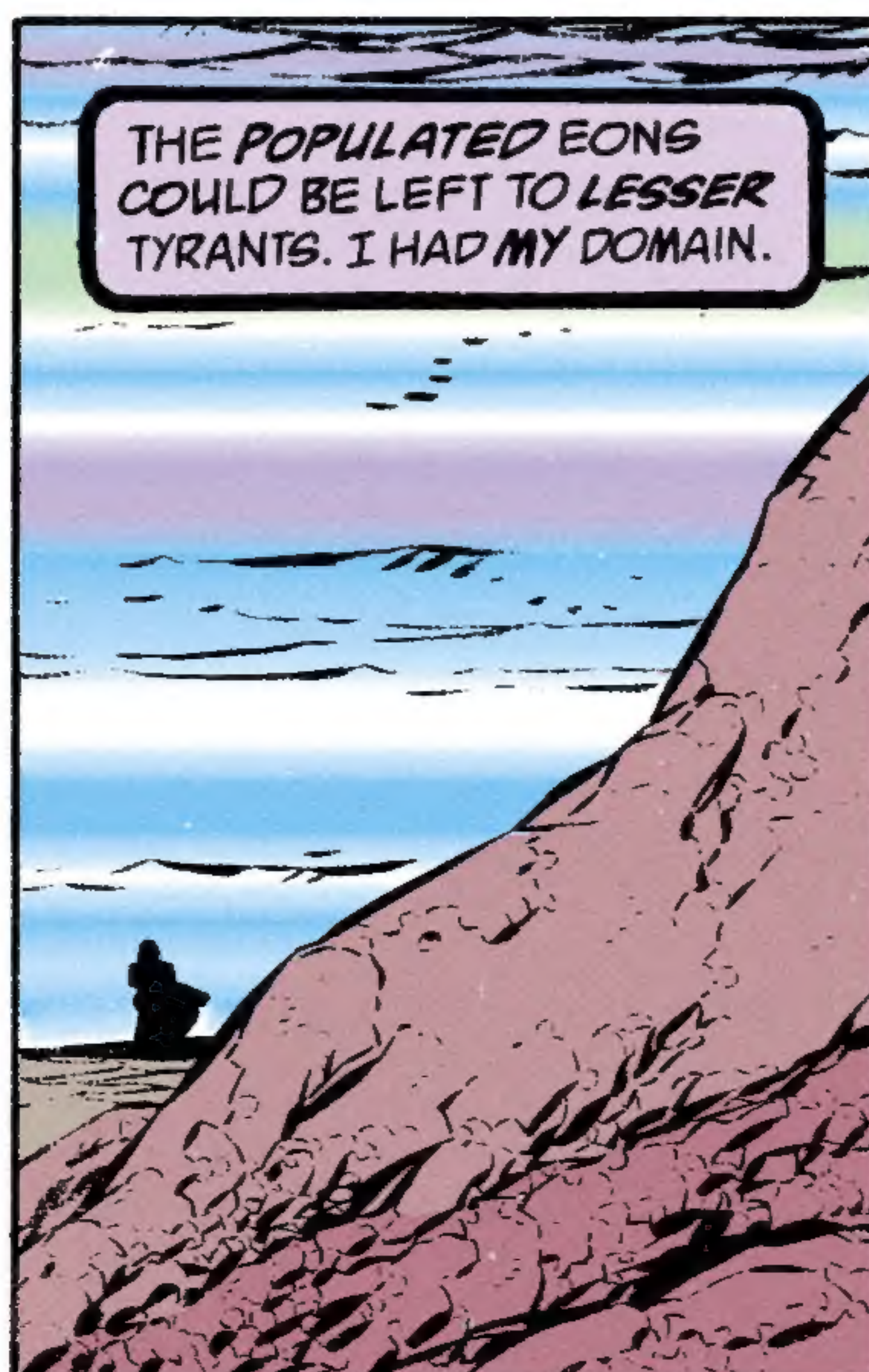
DURING MON-EL'S DORMANCY YOUR BIZARRE MELDING WAS UNDONE. MON-EL'S SOUL IS ONCE AGAIN INDEPENDENT AND STRONG.

YOU'VE BECOME A SUPERFLUOUS DISTRACTION, ELTRO GAND. AWAY WITH YOU!

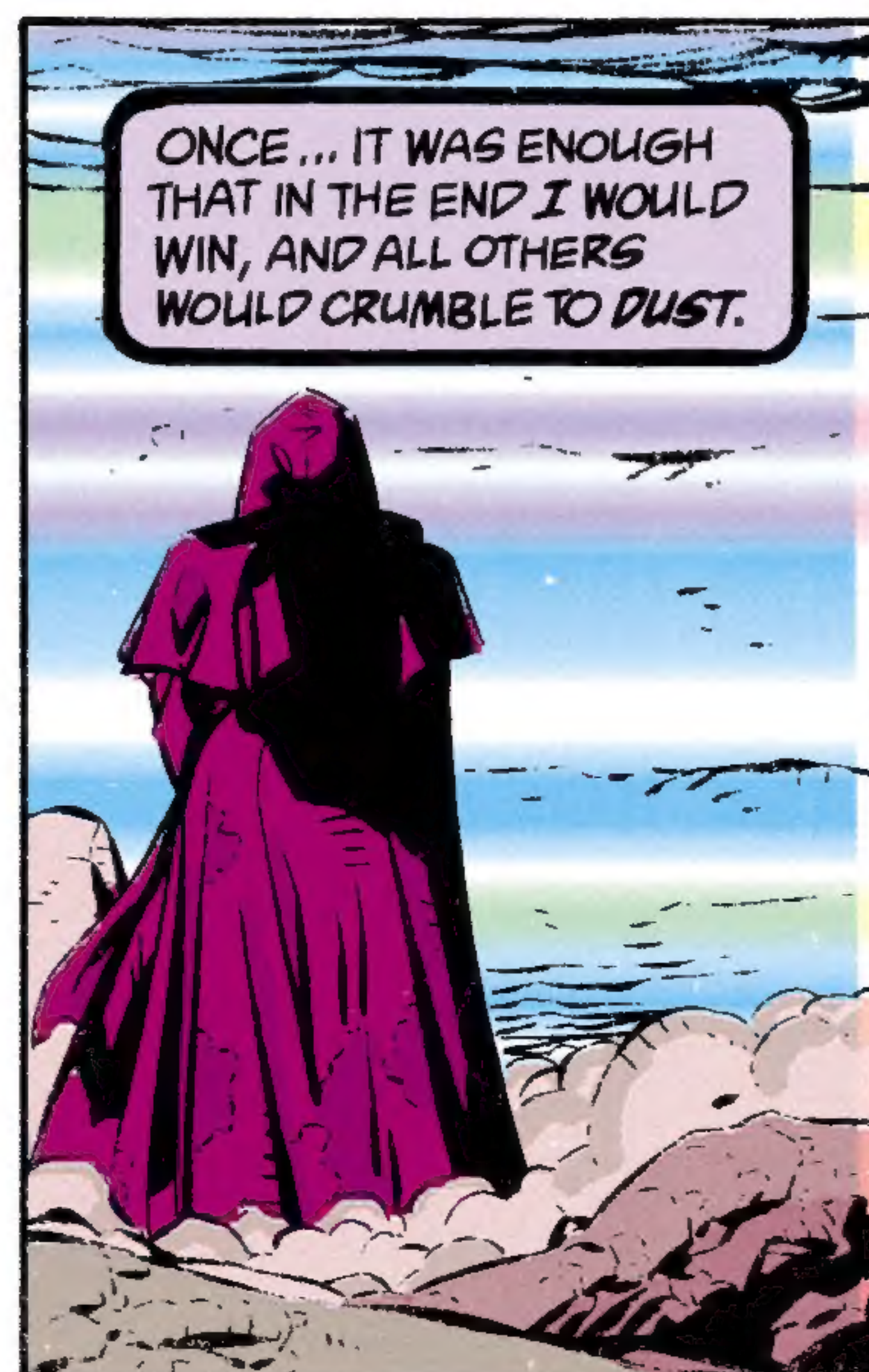




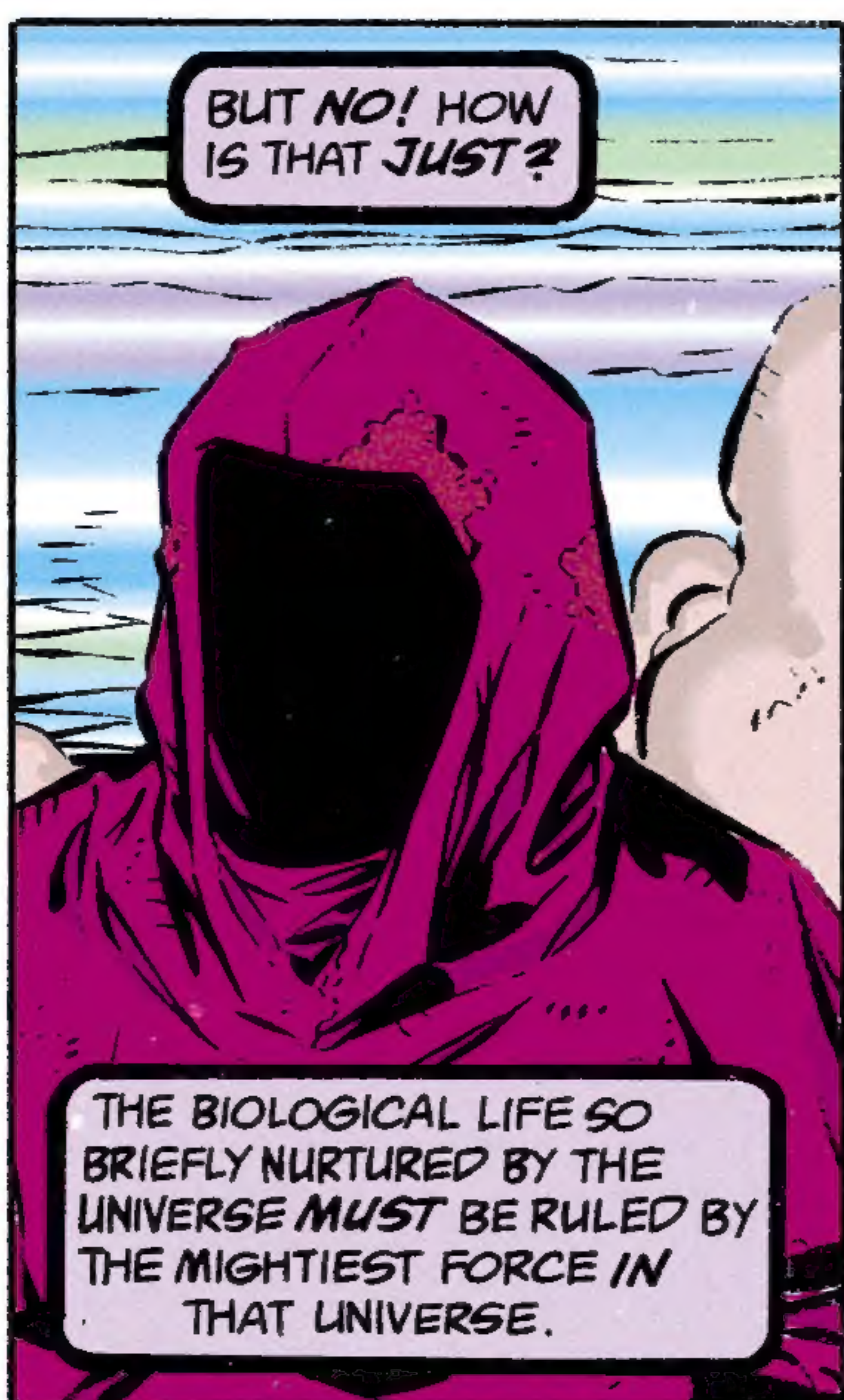
ONCE, I WAS SATISFIED
WITH MY REALM AT THE
END OF TIME.



THE POPULATED EONS
COULD BE LEFT TO *LESSER*
TYRANTS. I HAD MY DOMAIN.



ONCE ... IT WAS ENOUGH
THAT IN THE END I WOULD
WIN, AND ALL OTHERS
WOULD CRUMBLE TO DUST.

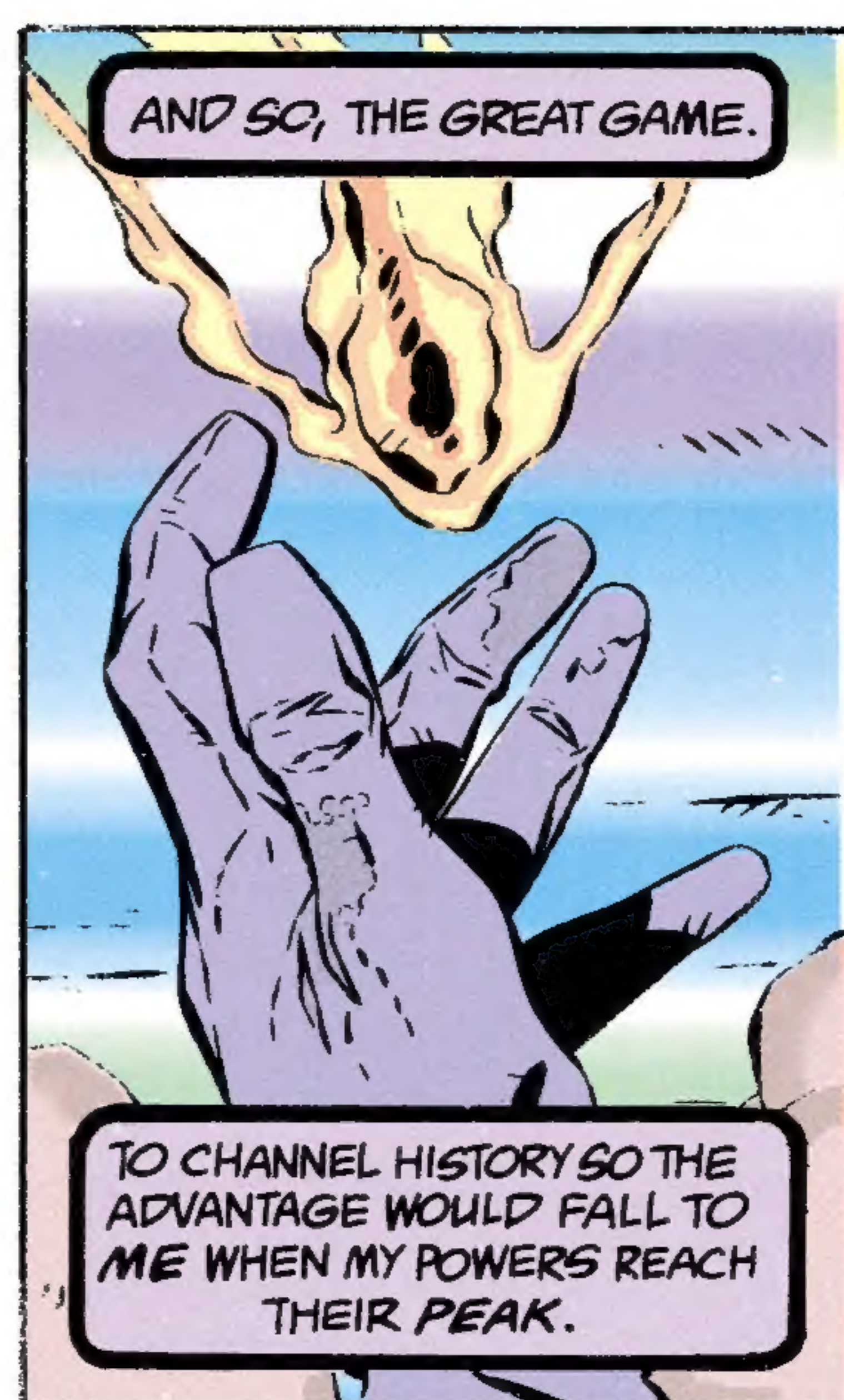


BUT NO! HOW
IS THAT *JUST*?

THE BIOLOGICAL LIFE SO
BRIEFLY NURTURED BY THE
UNIVERSE *MUST* BE RULED BY
THE MIGHTIEST FORCE IN
THAT UNIVERSE.

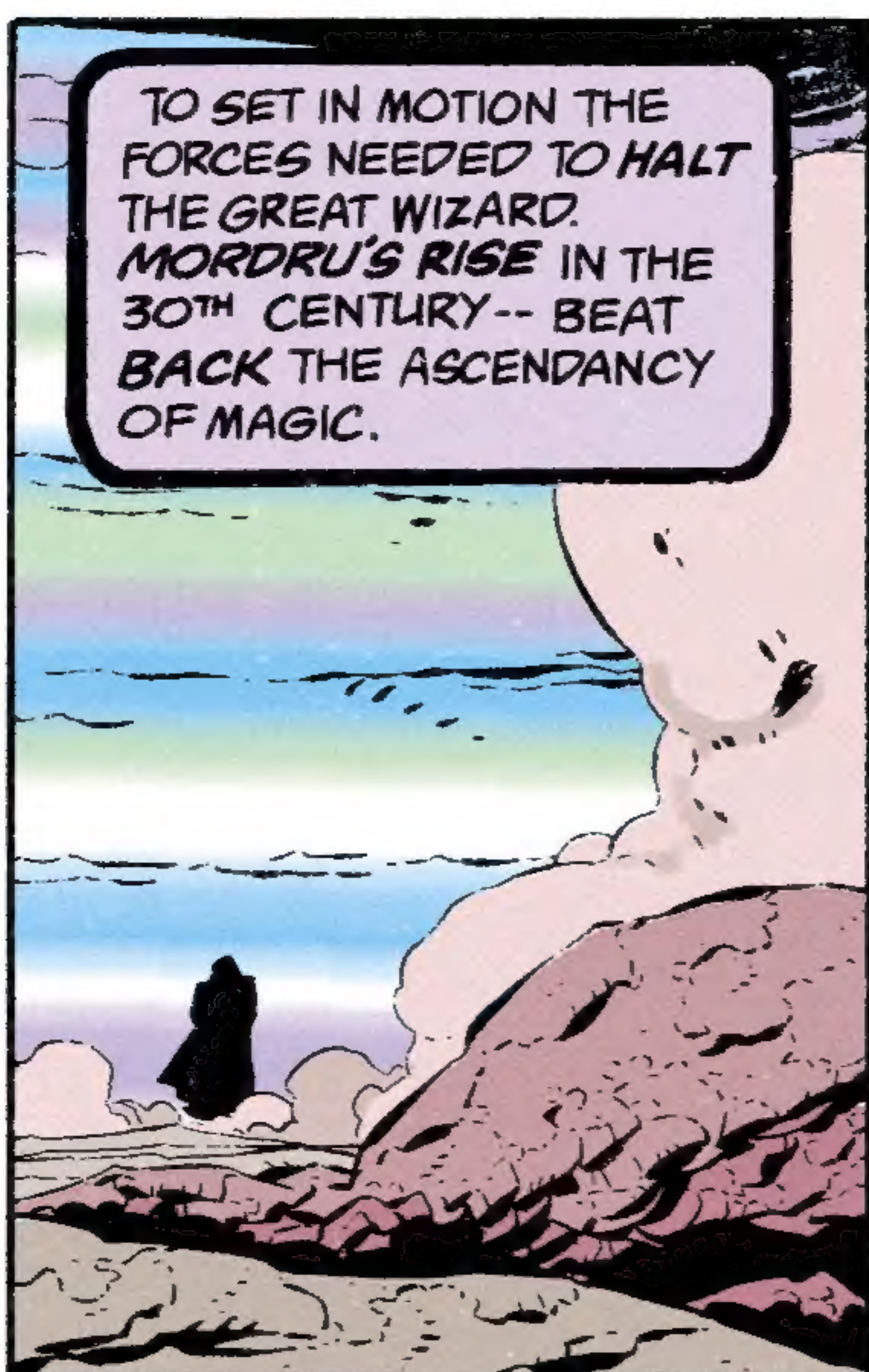


IT IS MY *DUTY* TO CONQUER
THE POPULATED ERAS.

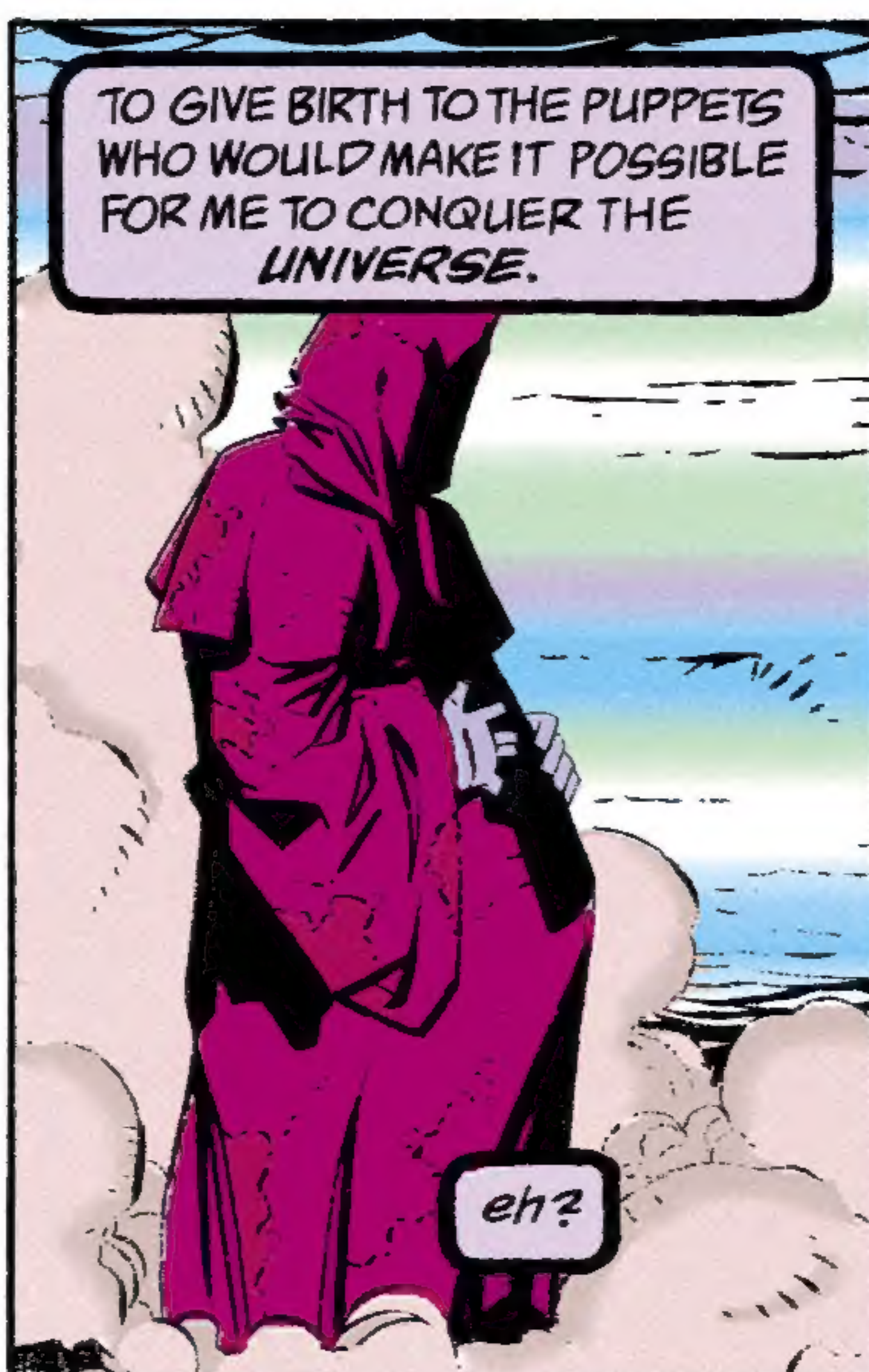


AND SO, THE GREAT GAME.

TO CHANNEL HISTORY SO THE
ADVANTAGE WOULD FALL TO
ME WHEN MY POWERS REACH
THEIR *PEAK*.

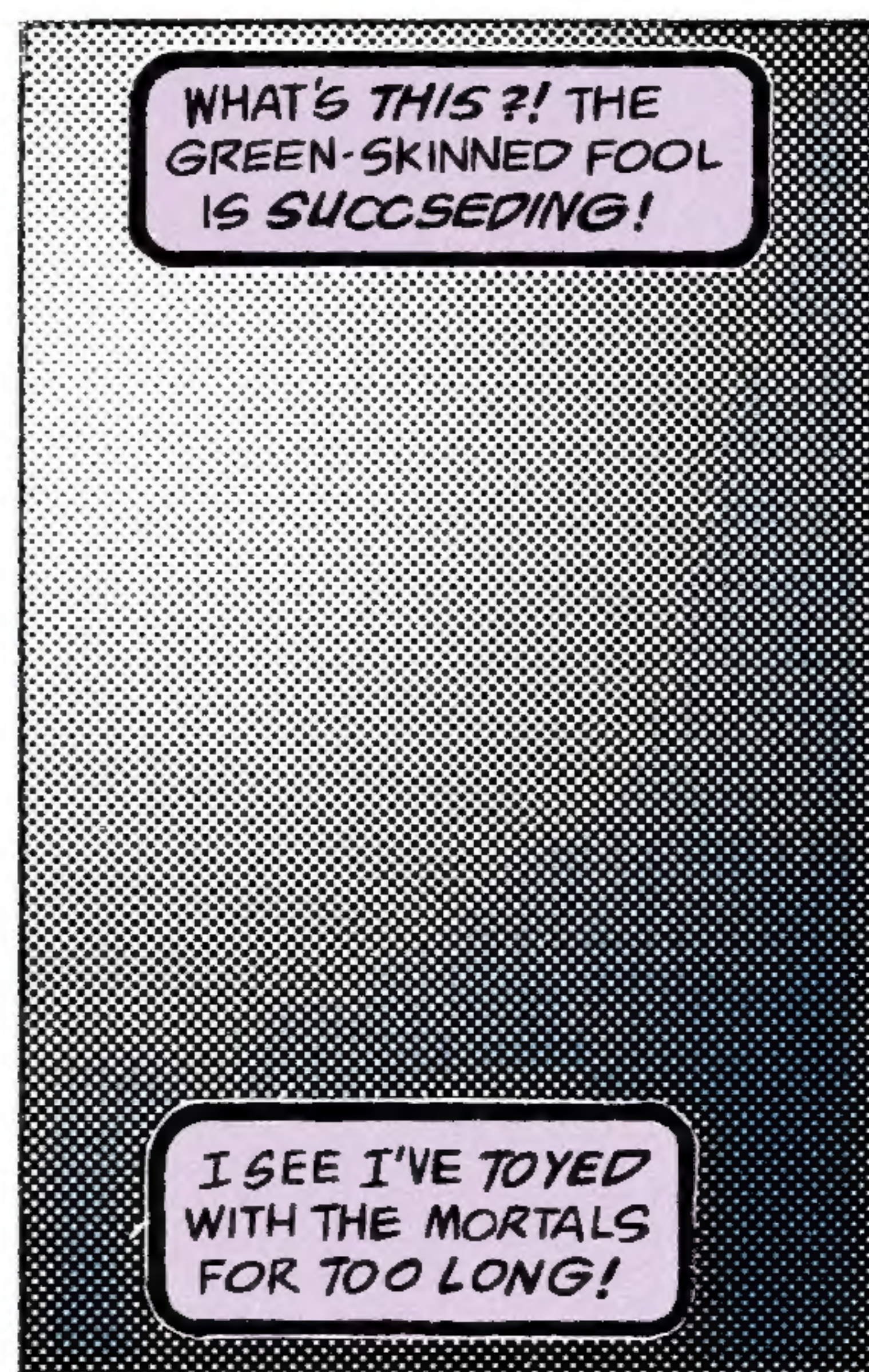


TO SET IN MOTION THE
FORCES NEEDED TO HALT
THE GREAT WIZARD.
MORDRU'S RISE IN THE
30TH CENTURY-- BEAT
BACK THE ASCENDANCY
OF MAGIC.



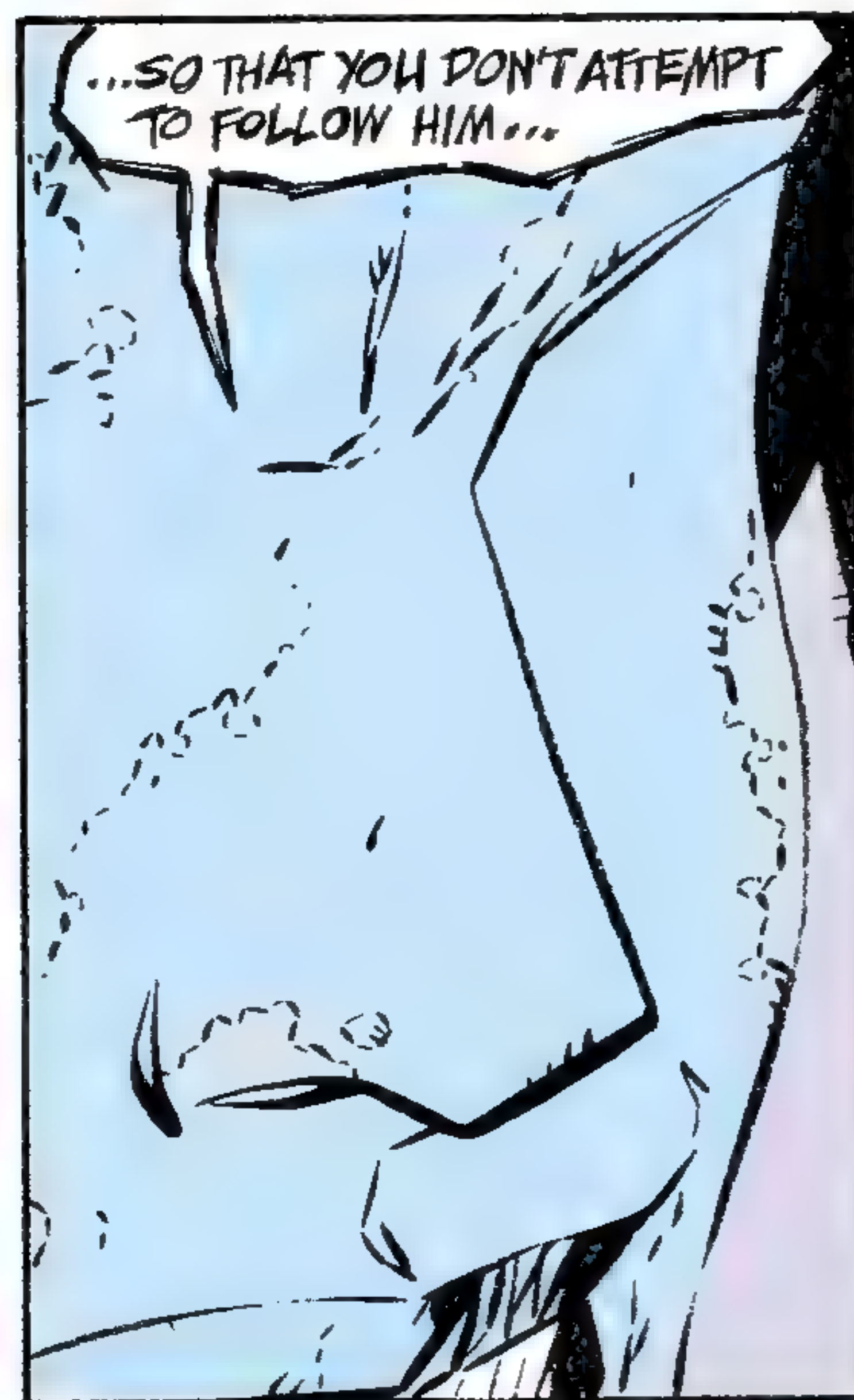
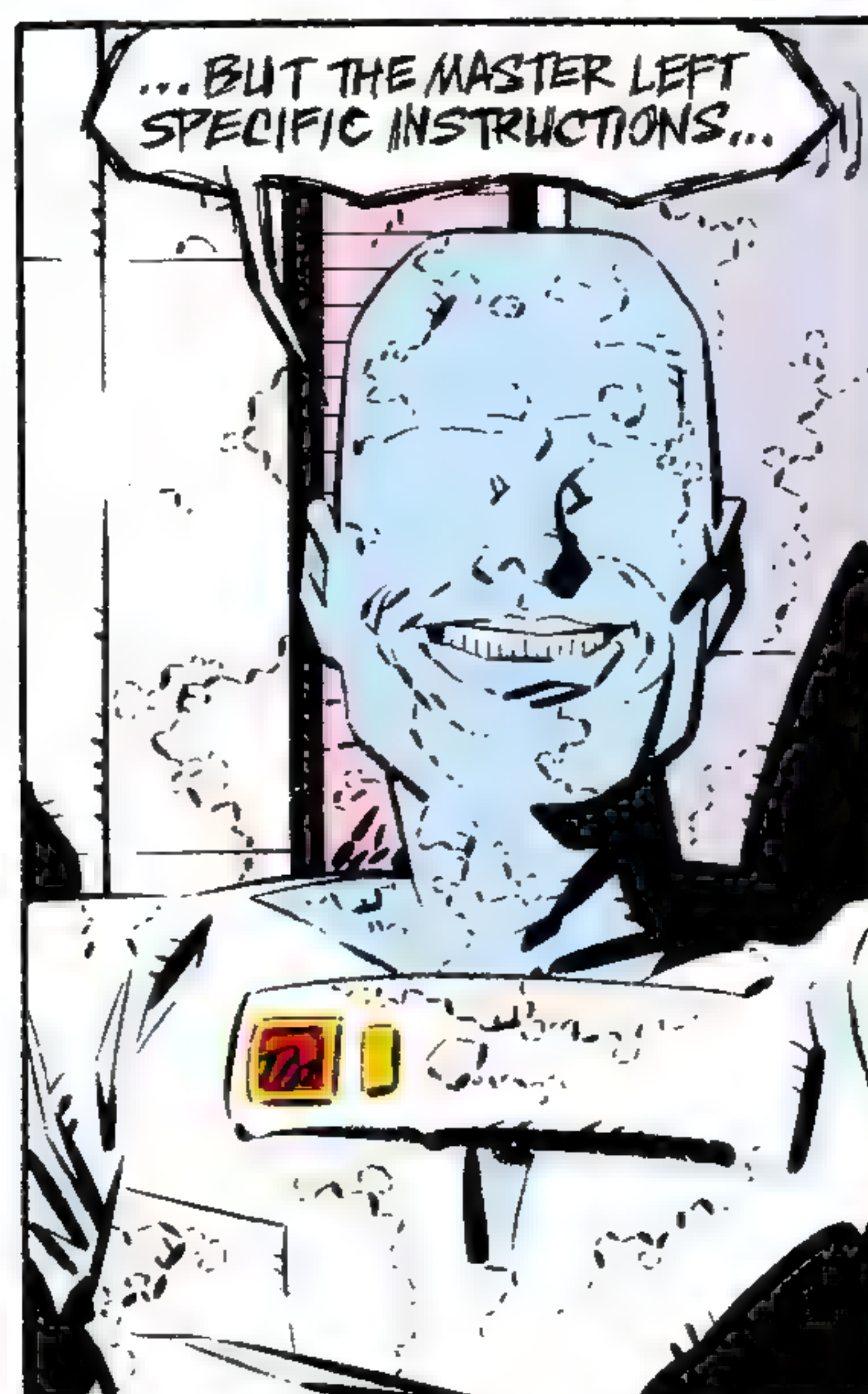
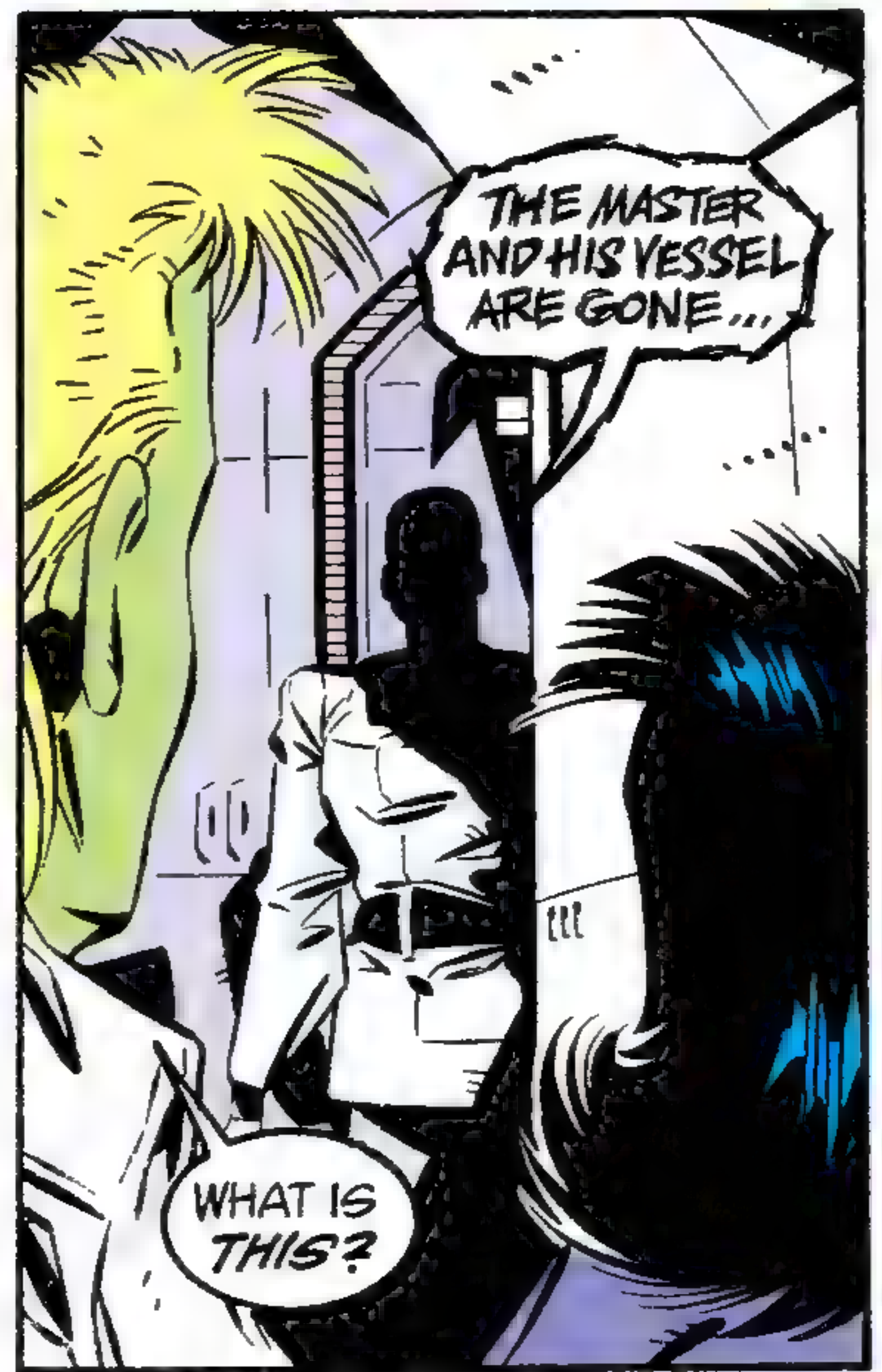
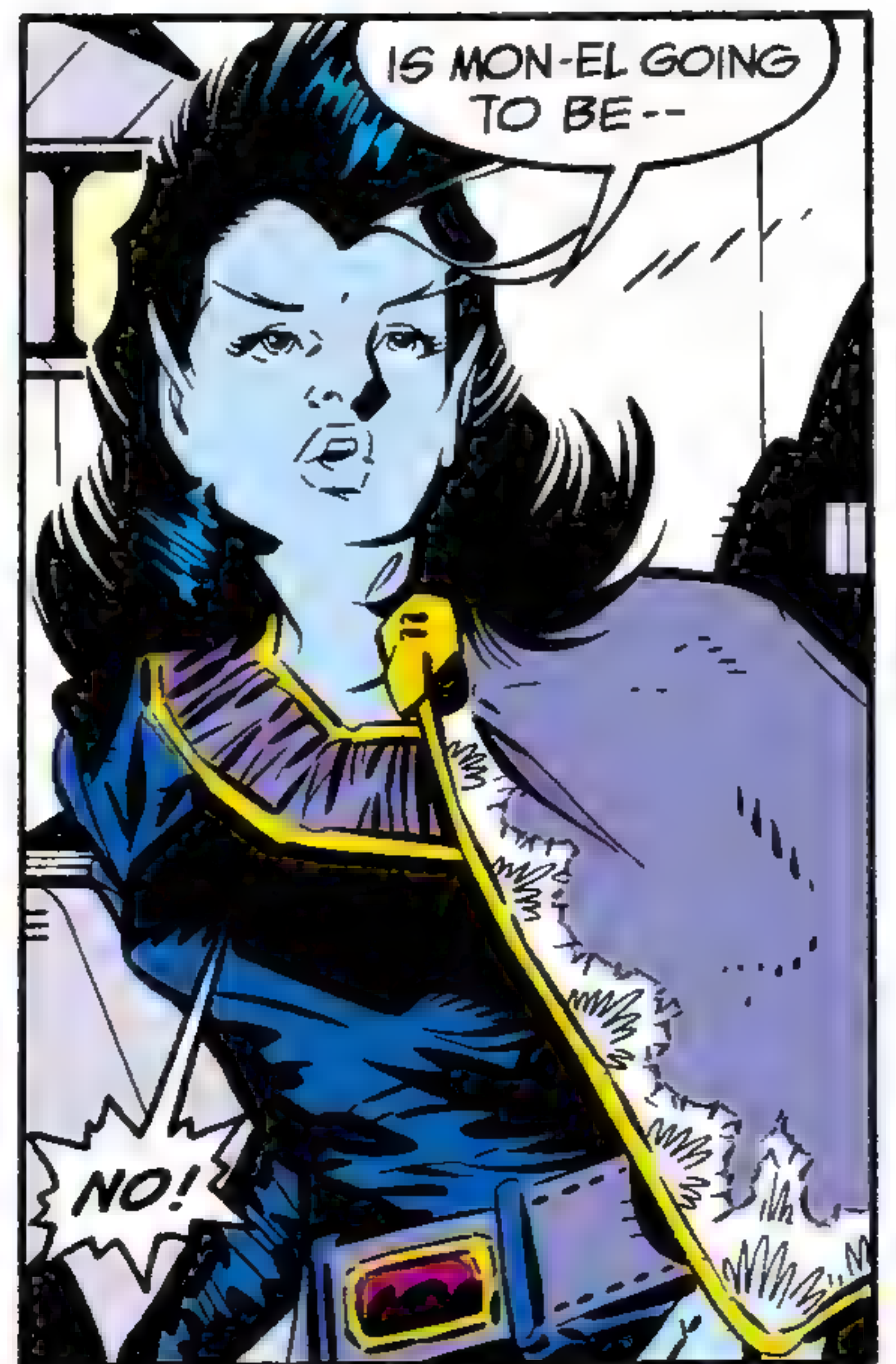
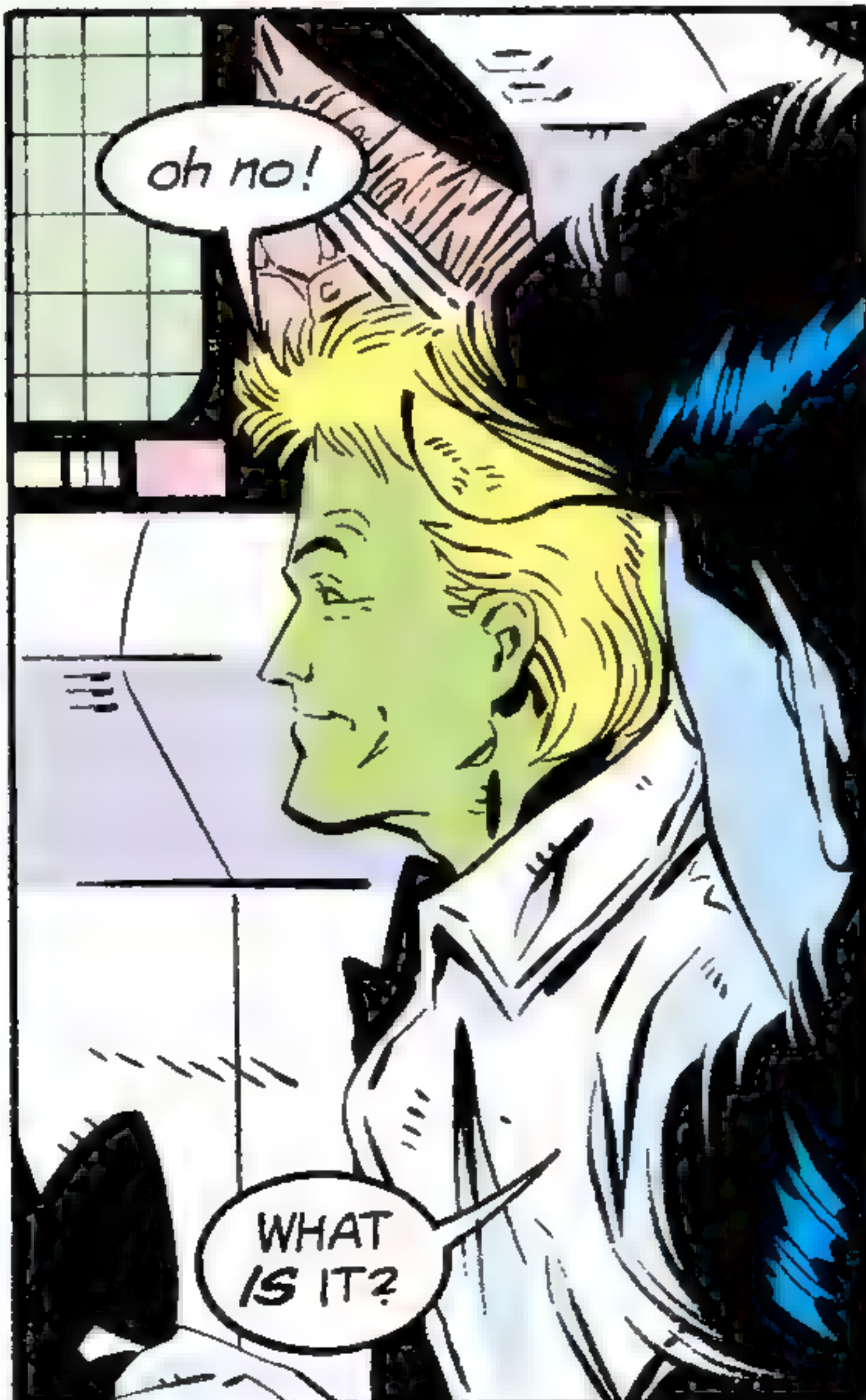
TO GIVE BIRTH TO THE PUPPETS
WHO WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE
FOR ME TO CONQUER THE
UNIVERSE.

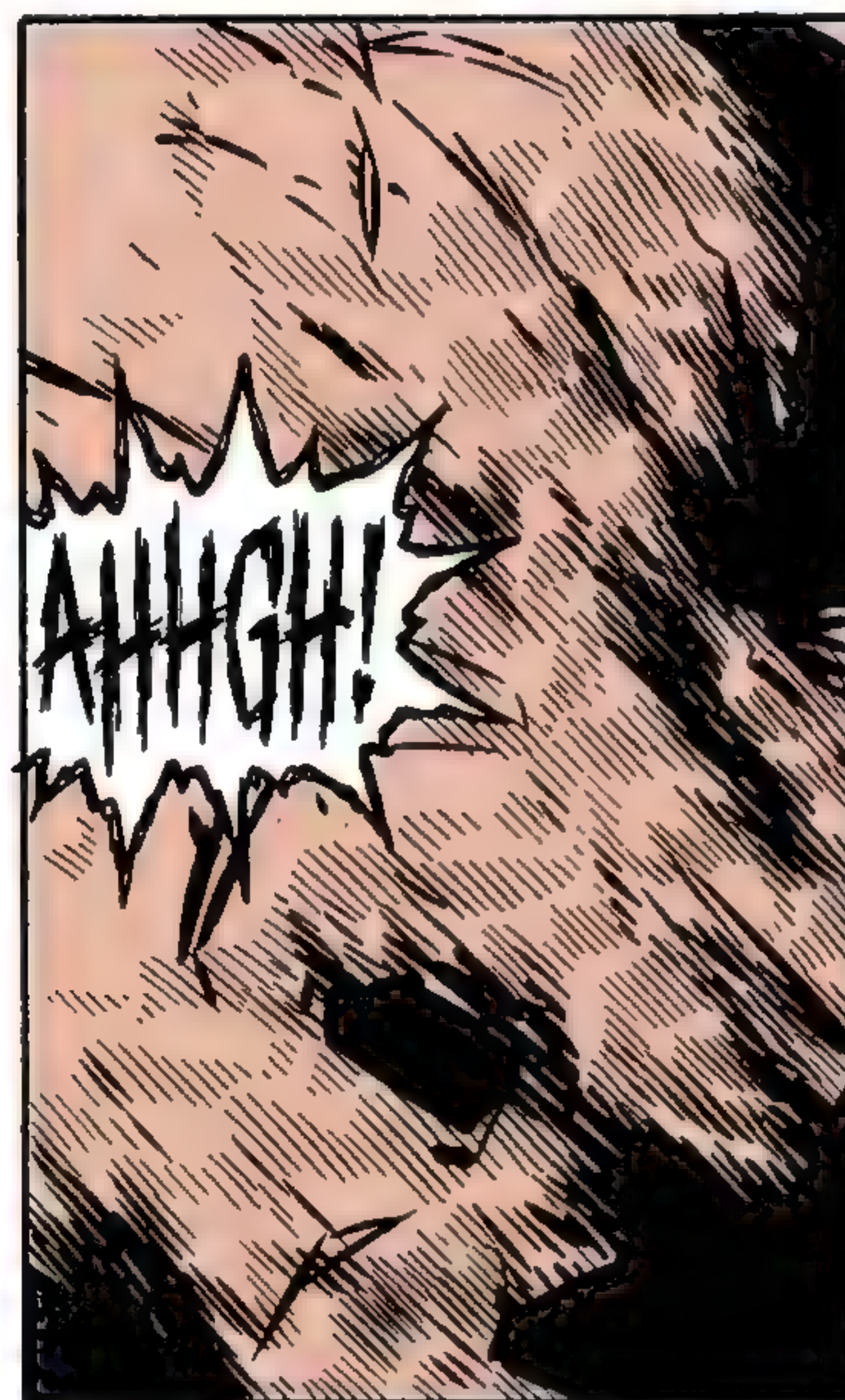
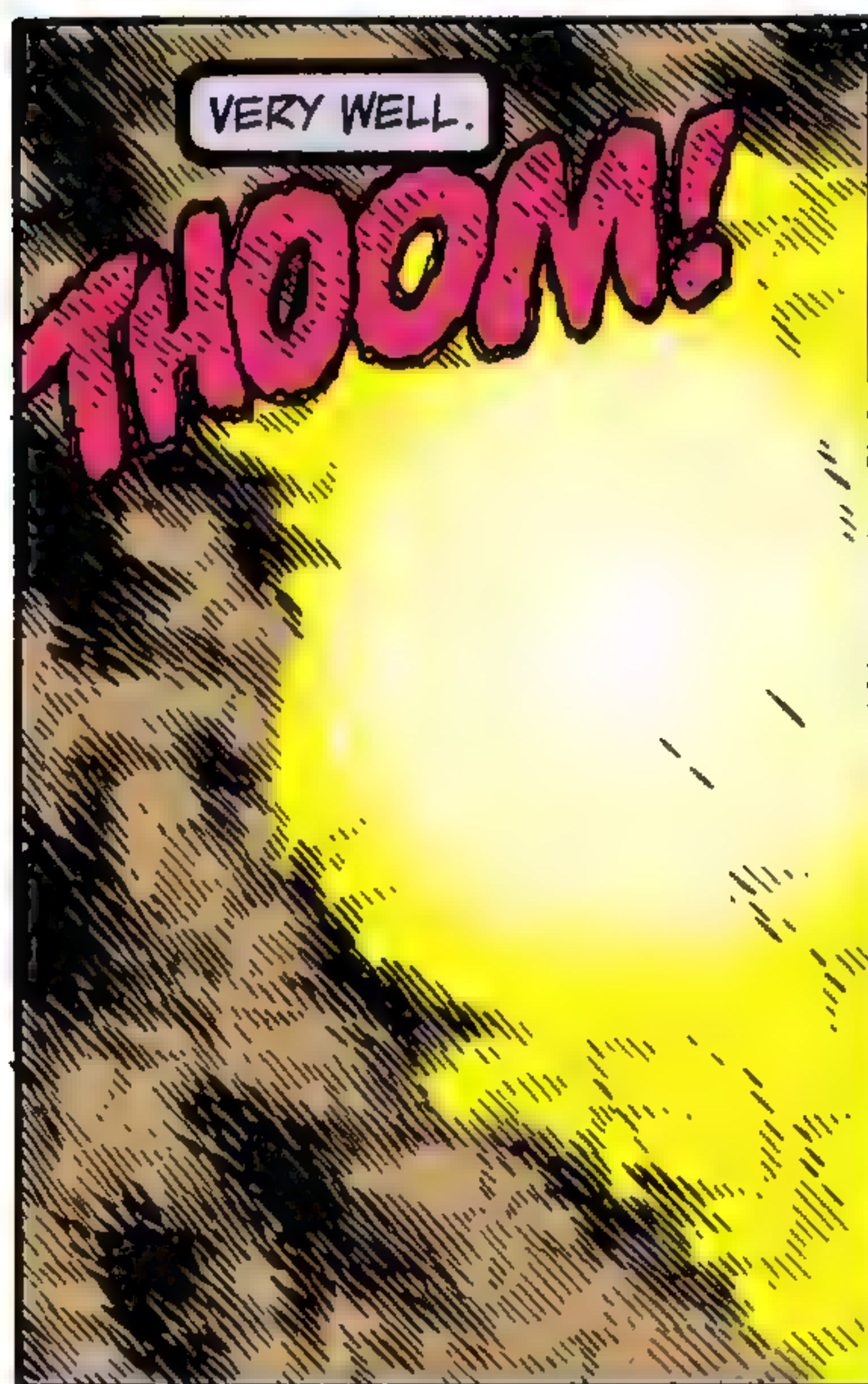
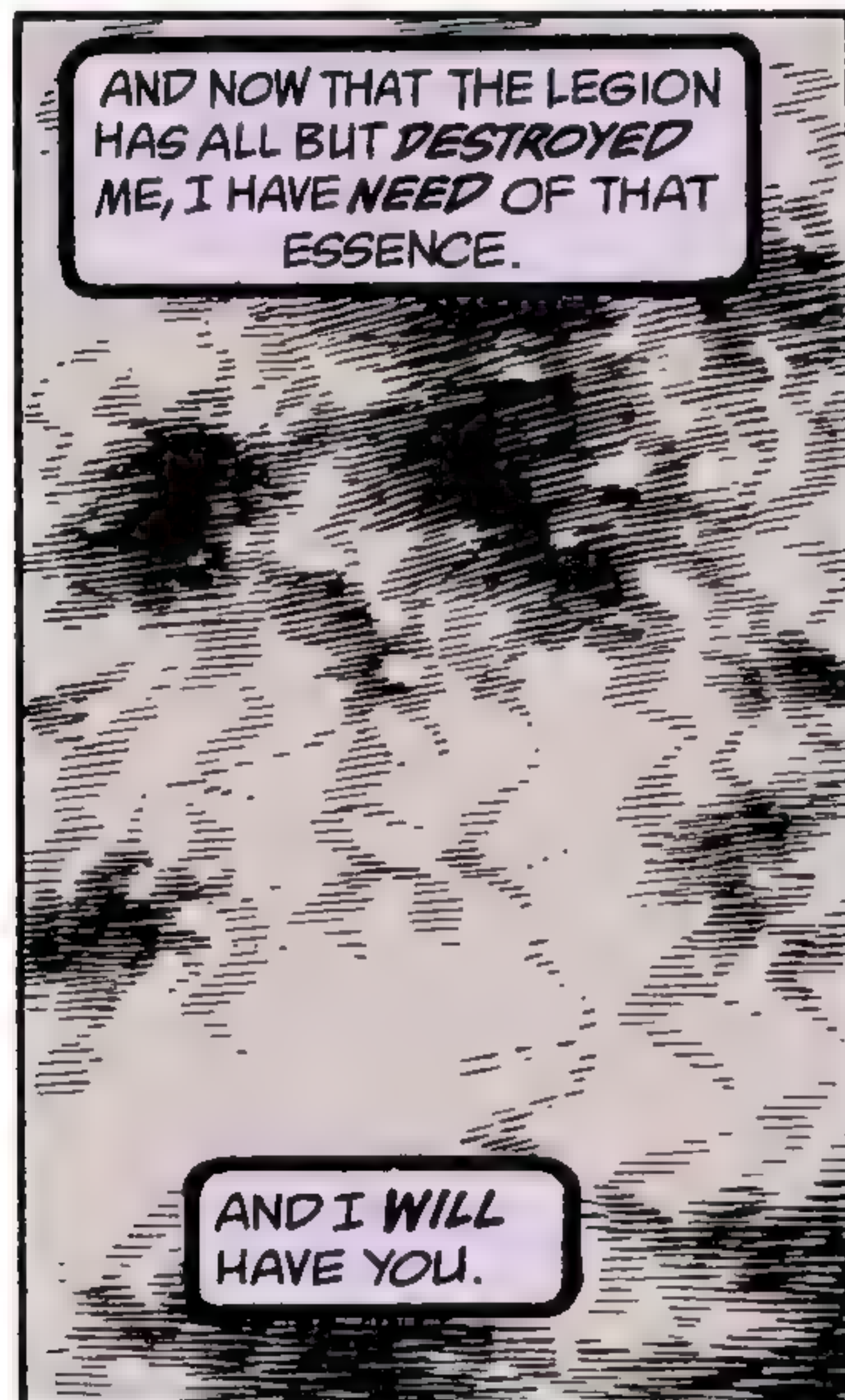
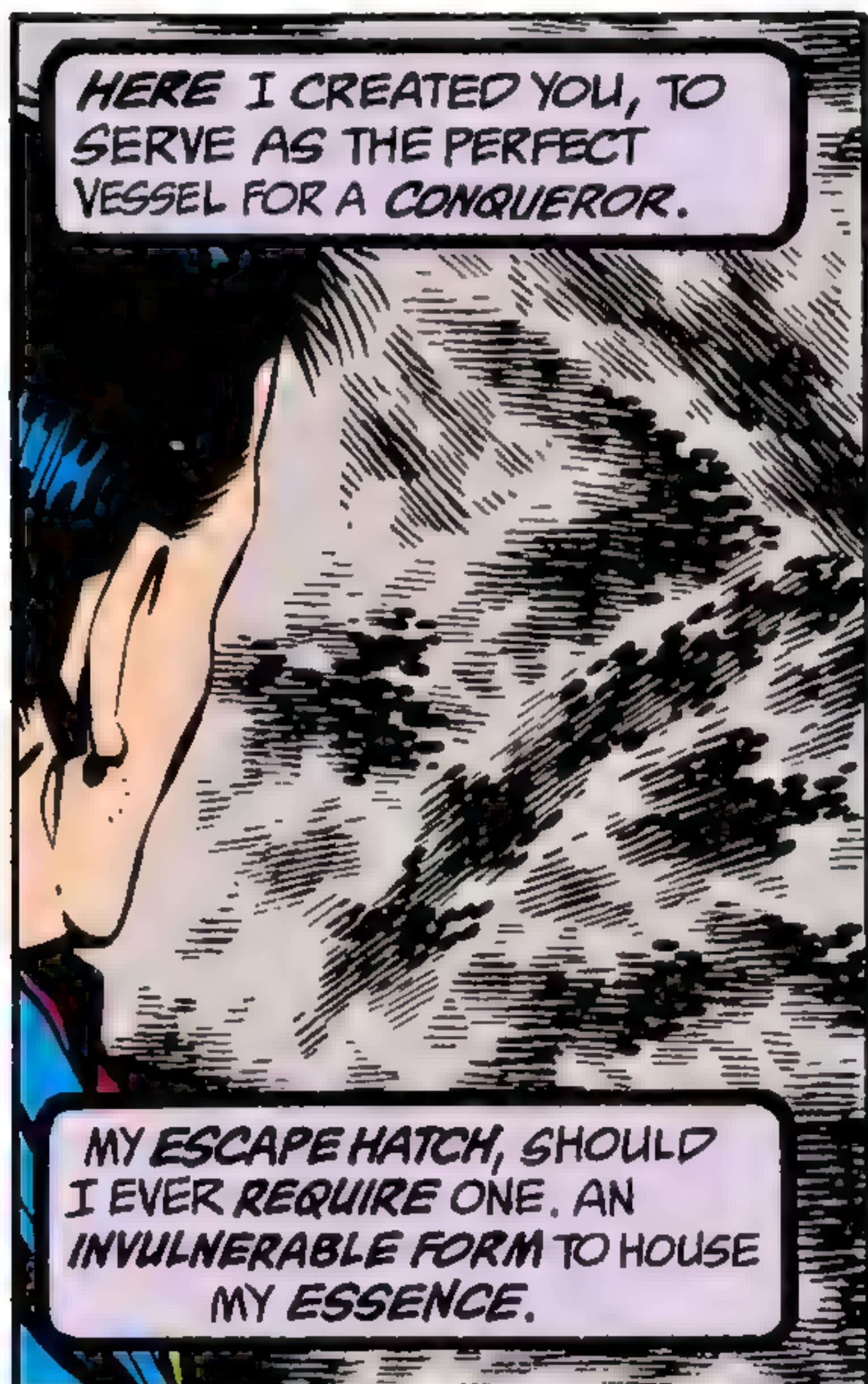
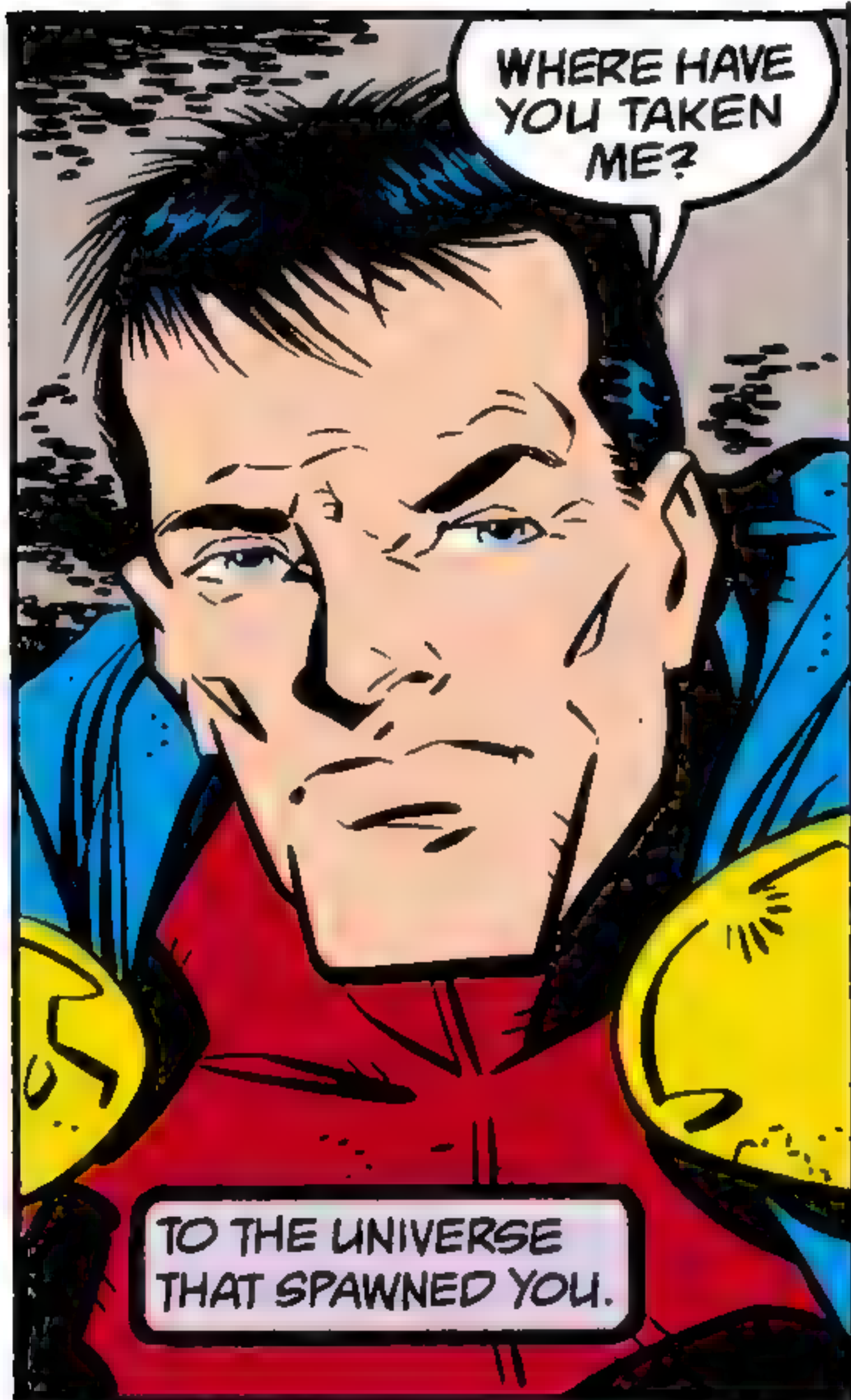
eh?

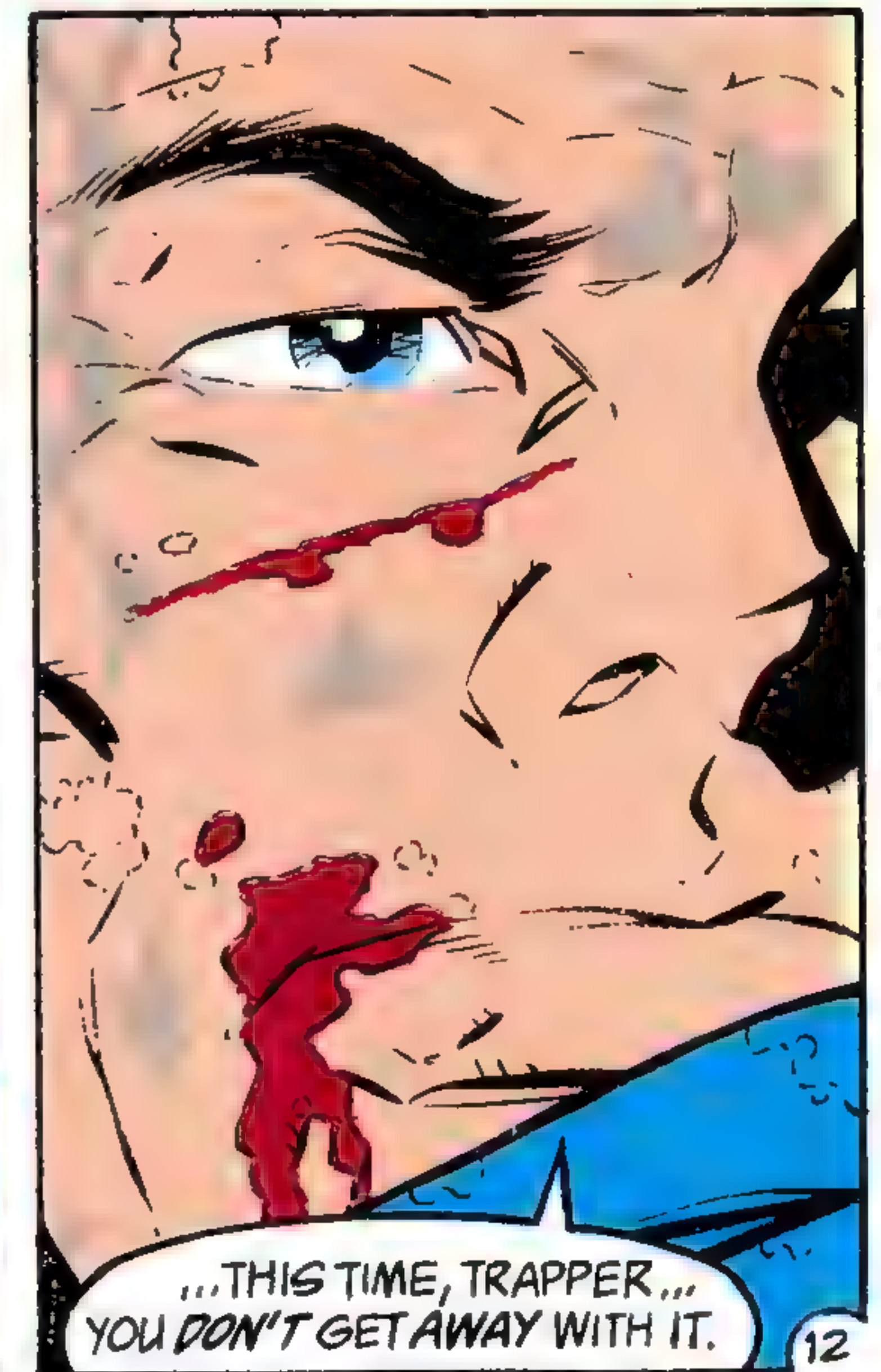
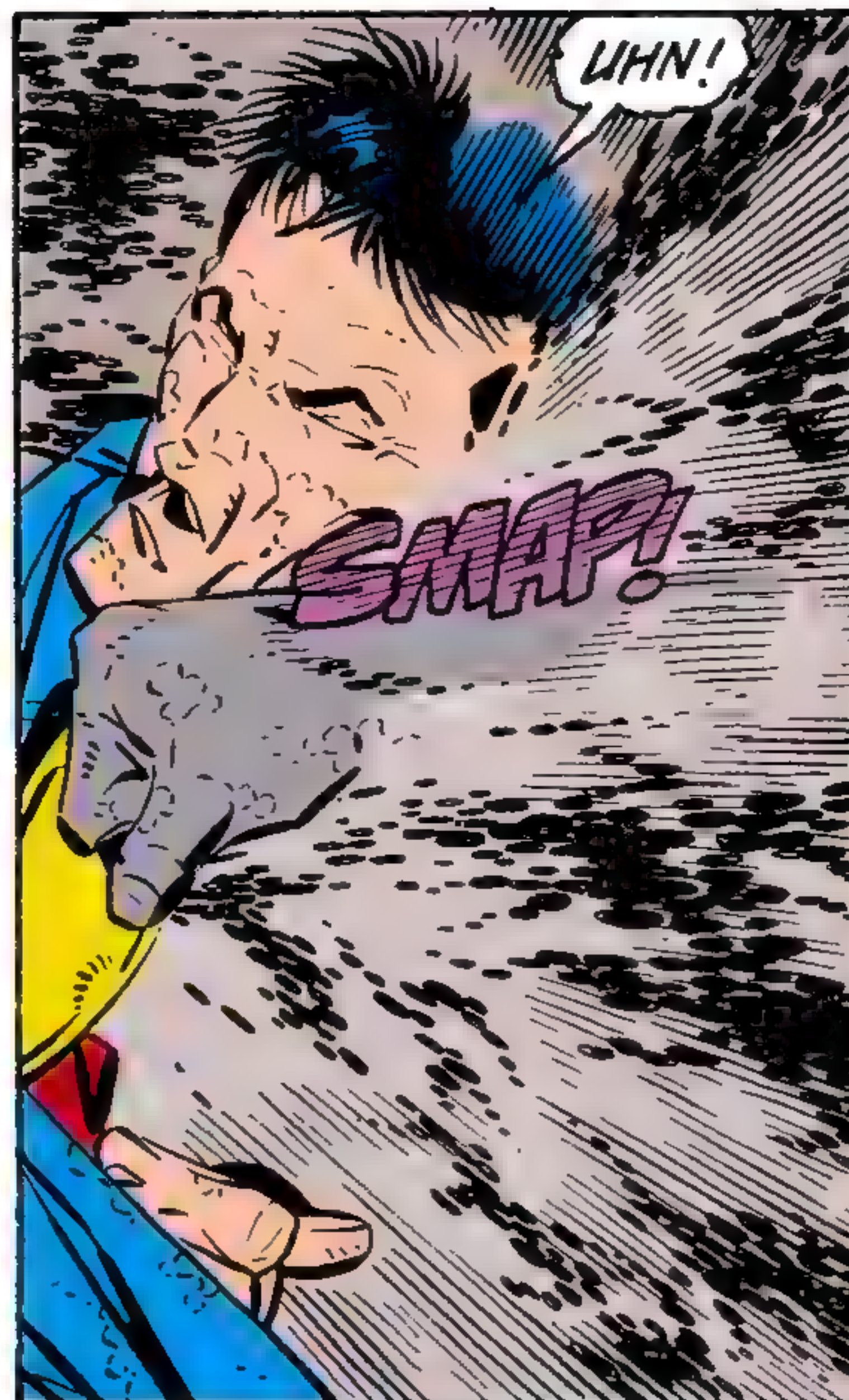
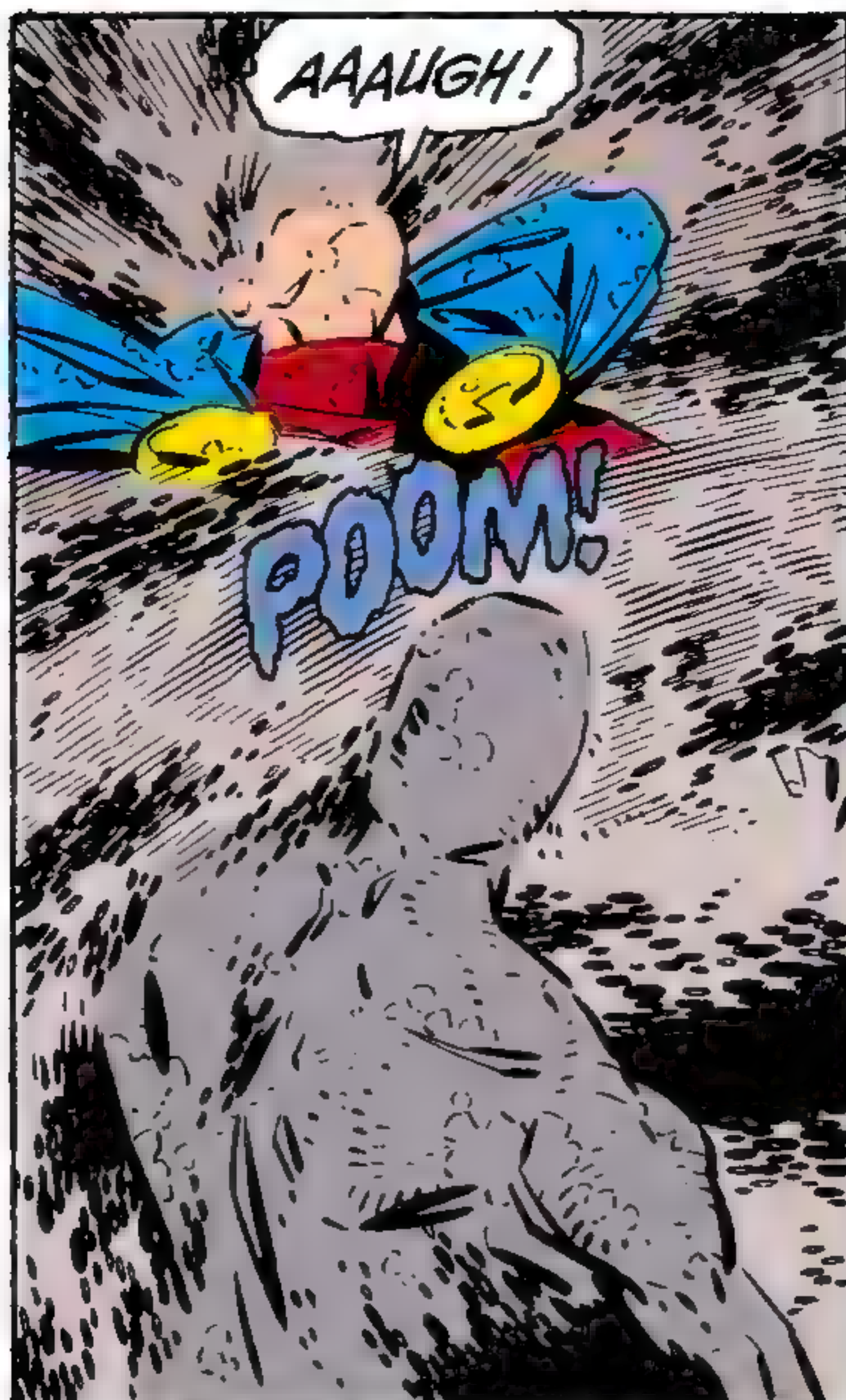
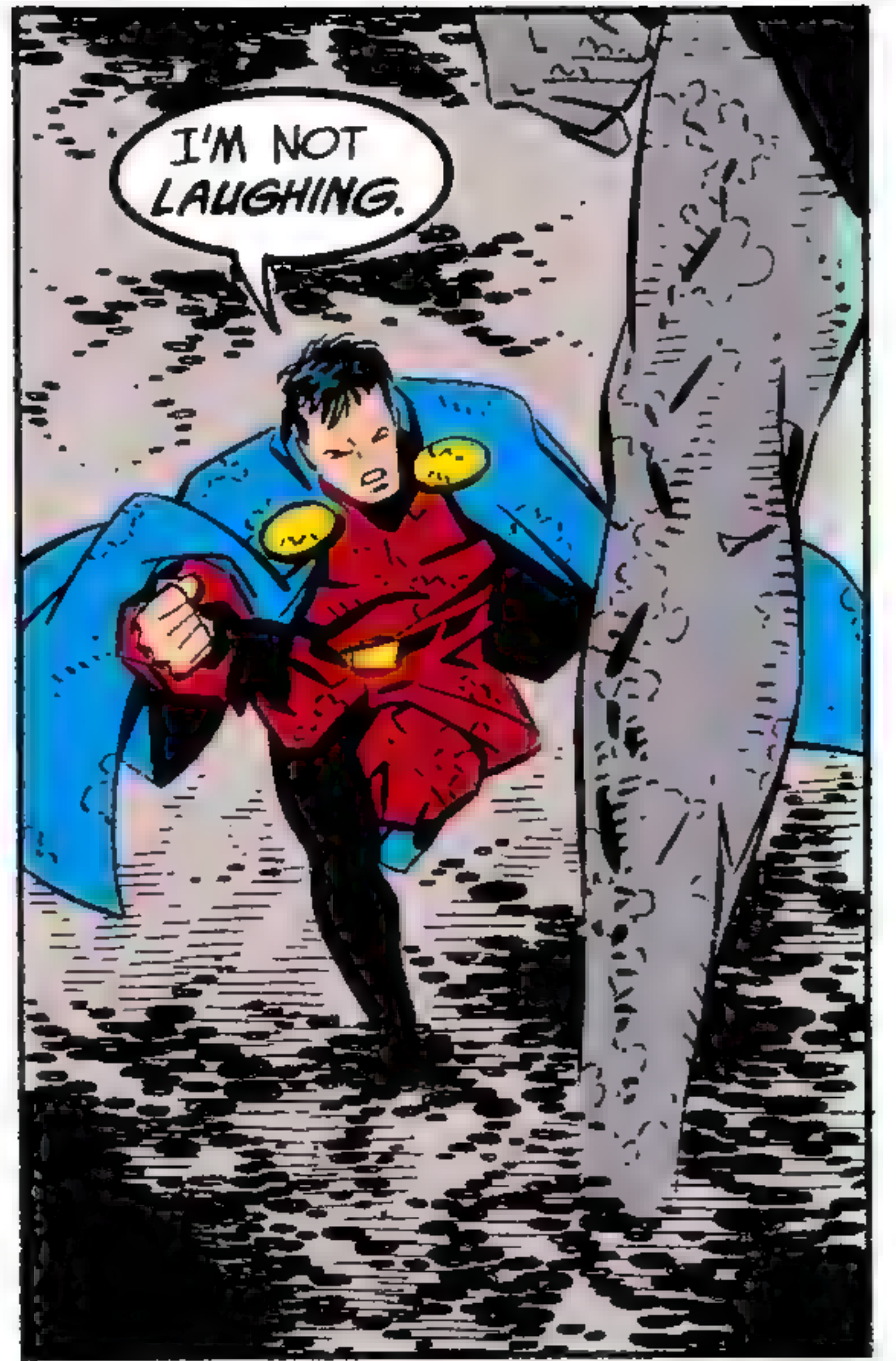
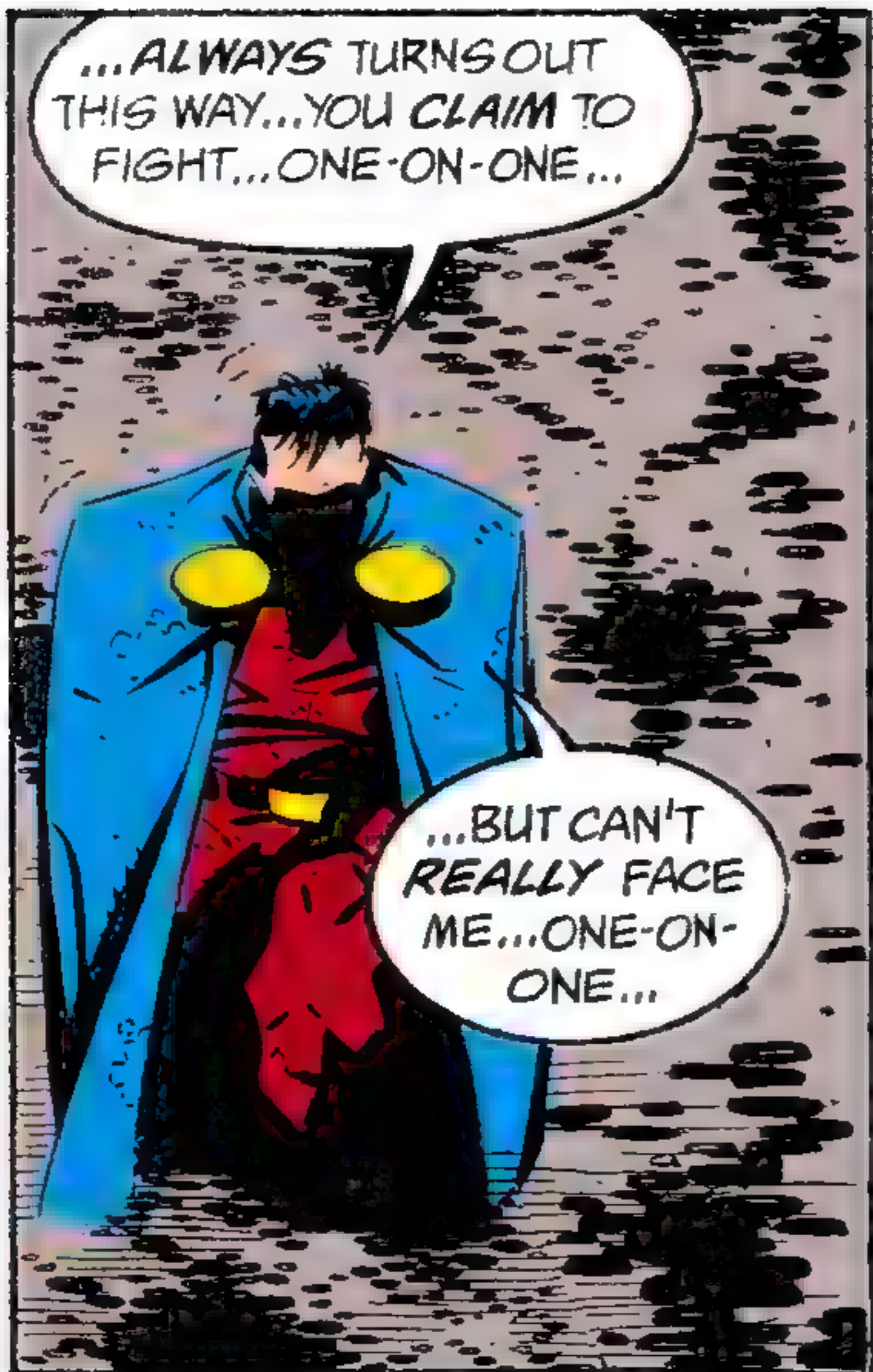


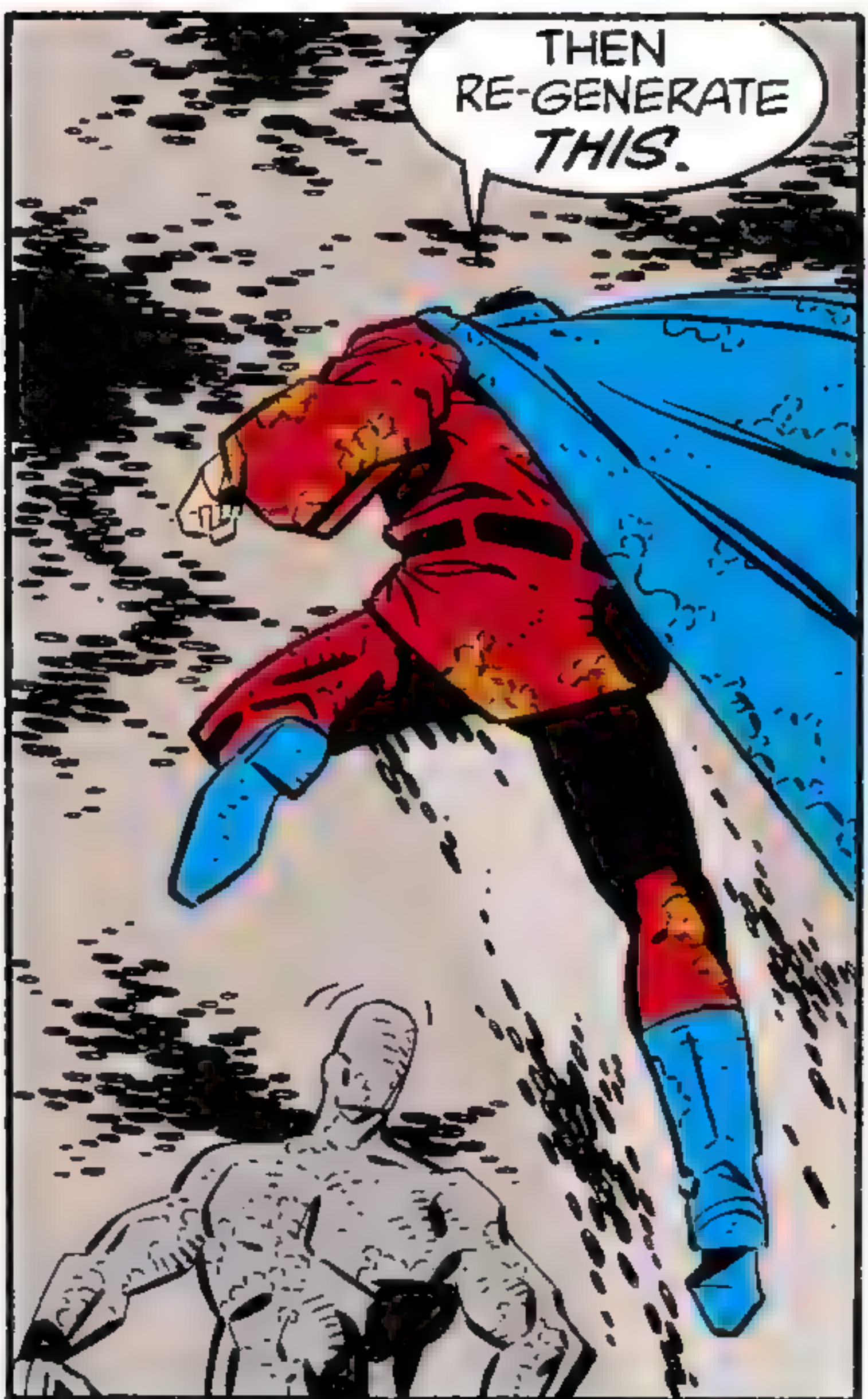
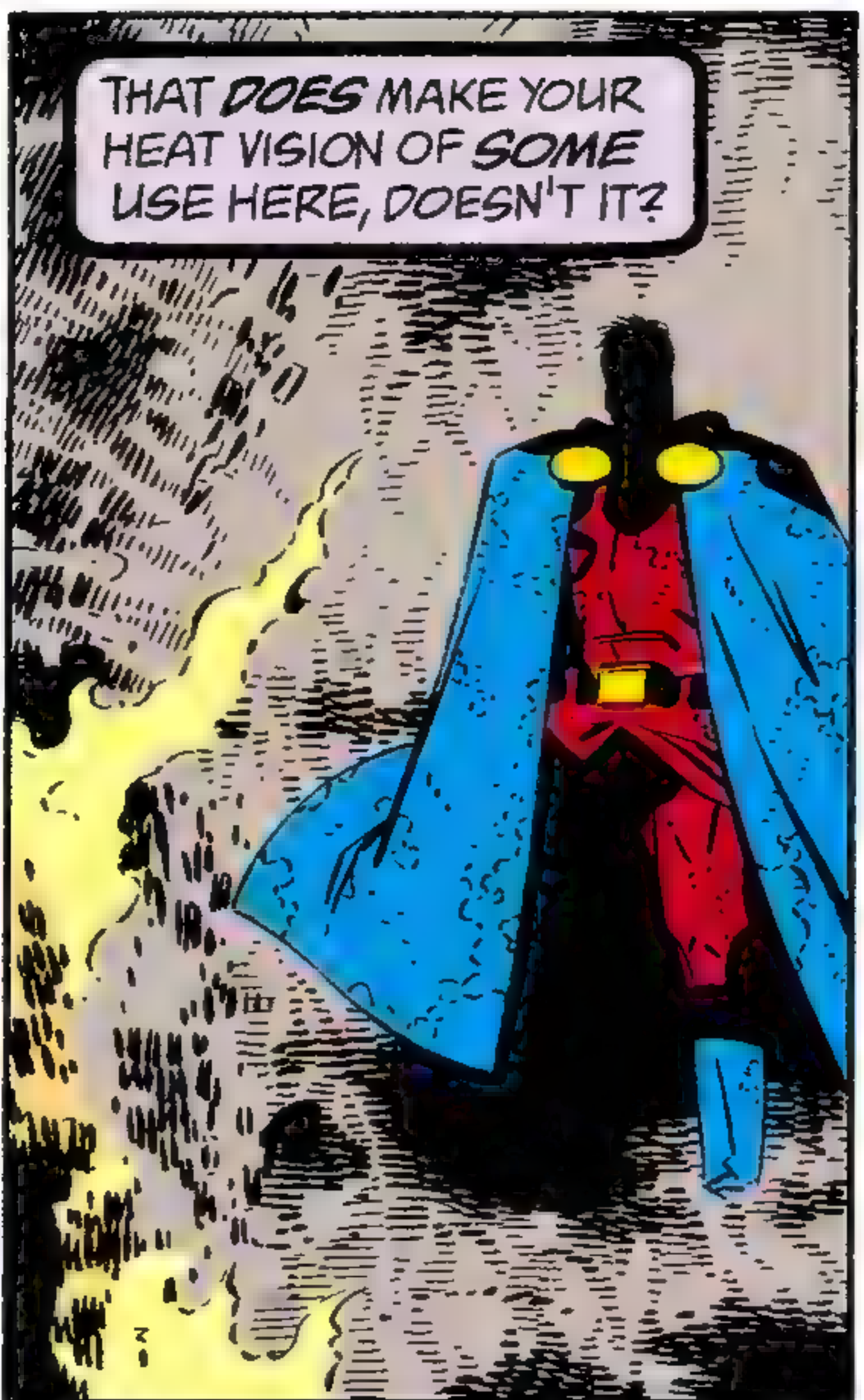
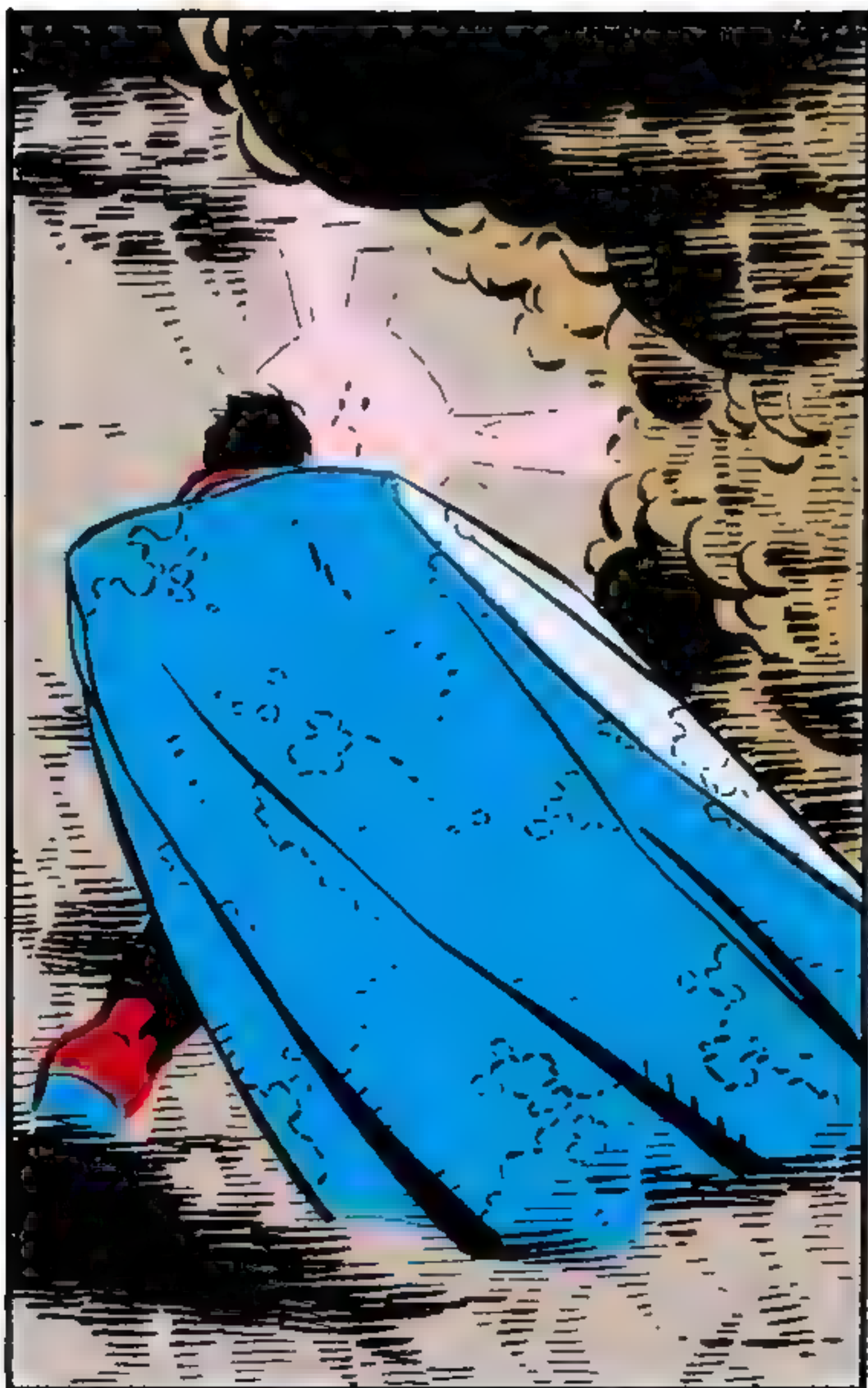
WHAT'S *THIS*?! THE
GREEN-SKINNED FOOL
IS *SUCCESSING*!

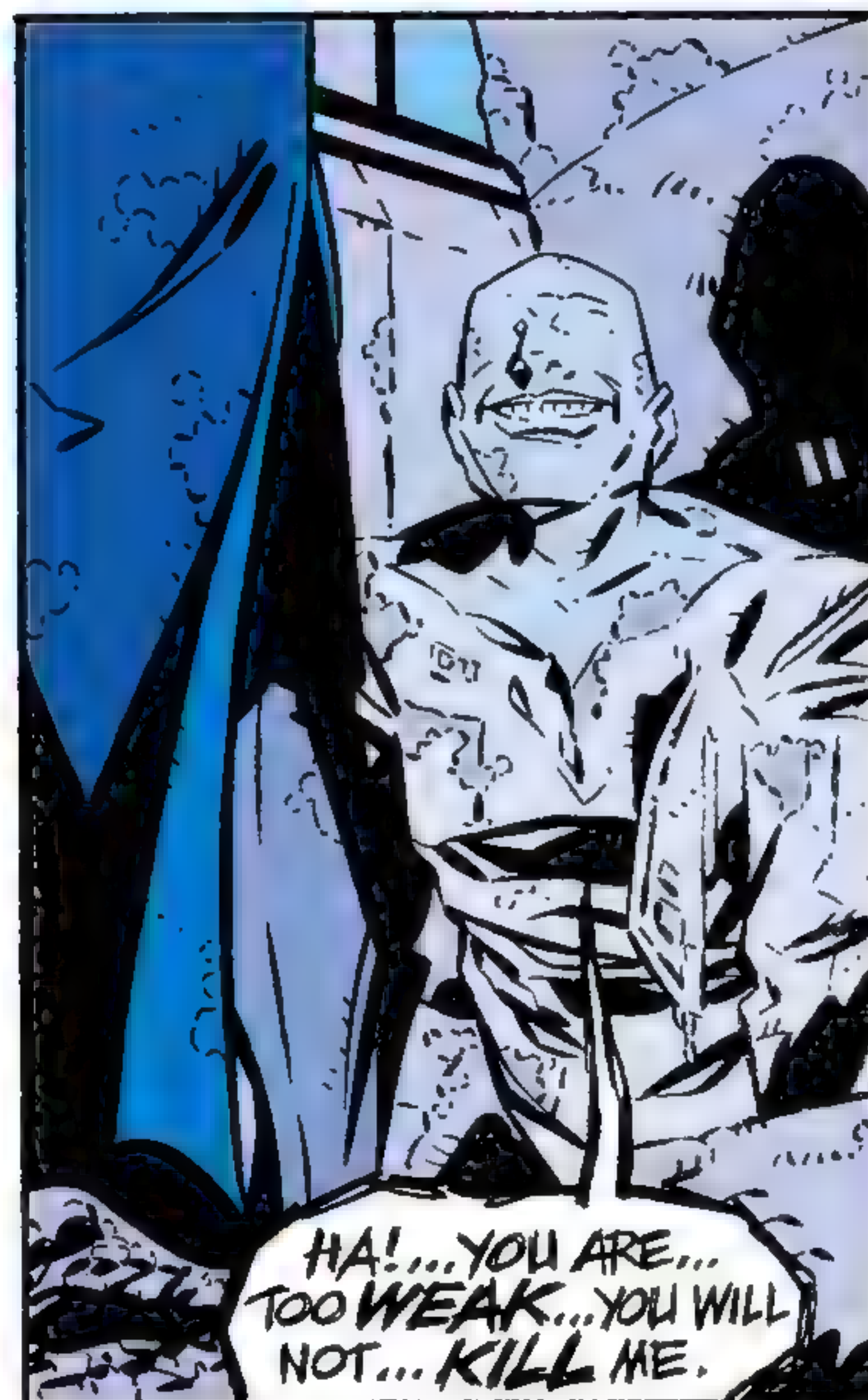
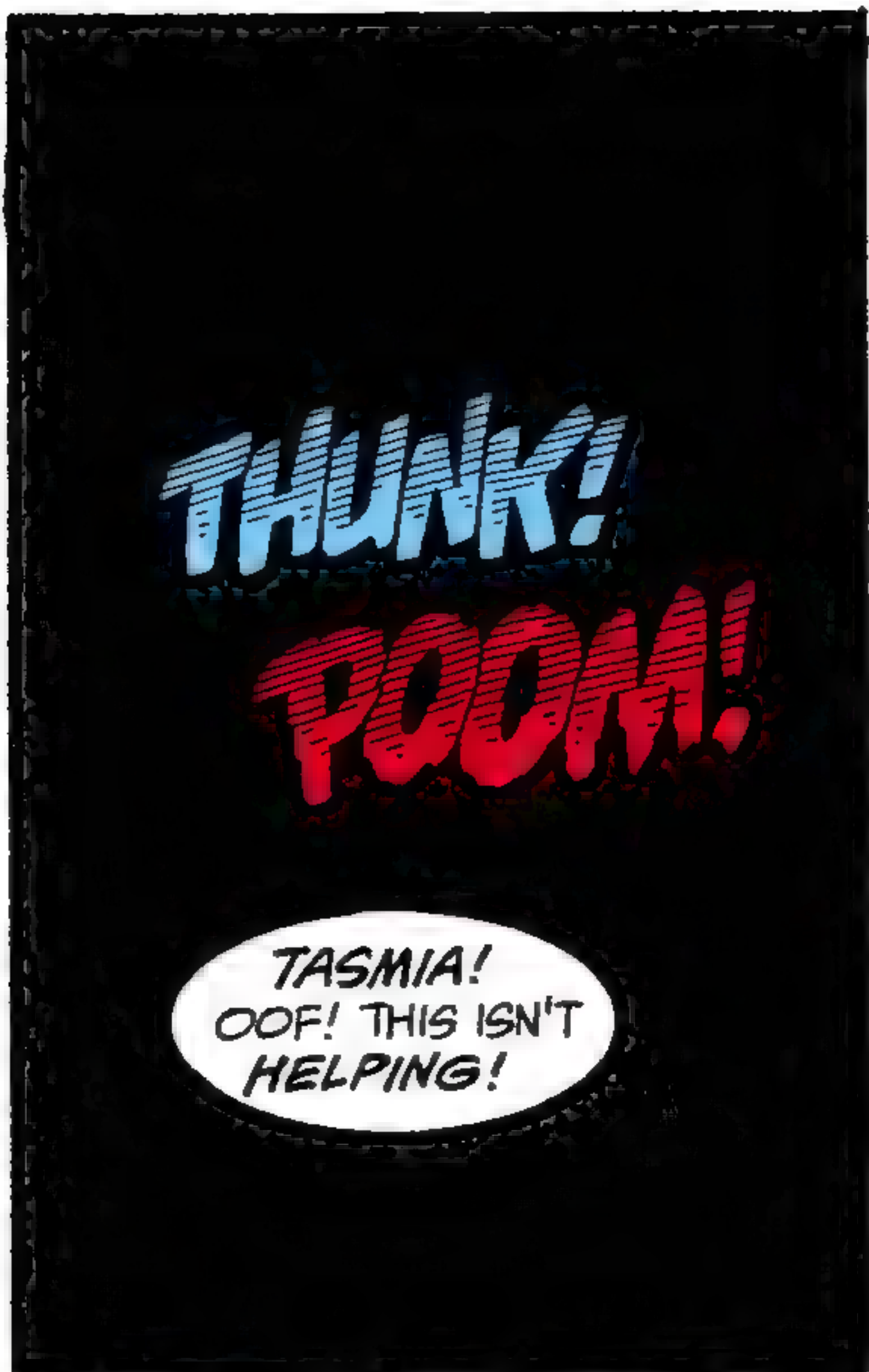
I SEE I'VE *TOYED*
WITH THE MORTALS
FOR TOO LONG!





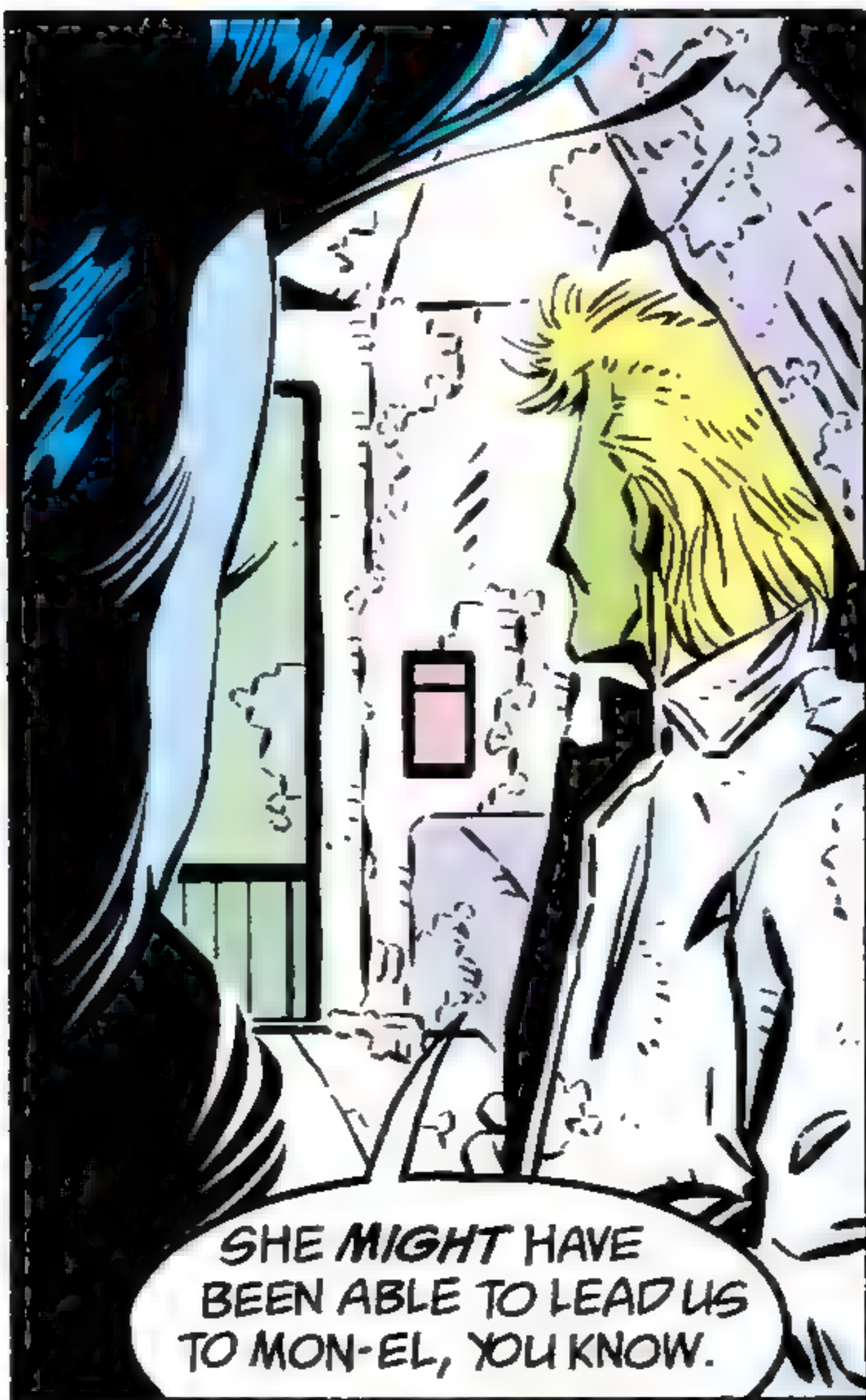








I DON'T THINK THAT WAS SUCH A GOOD IDEA.

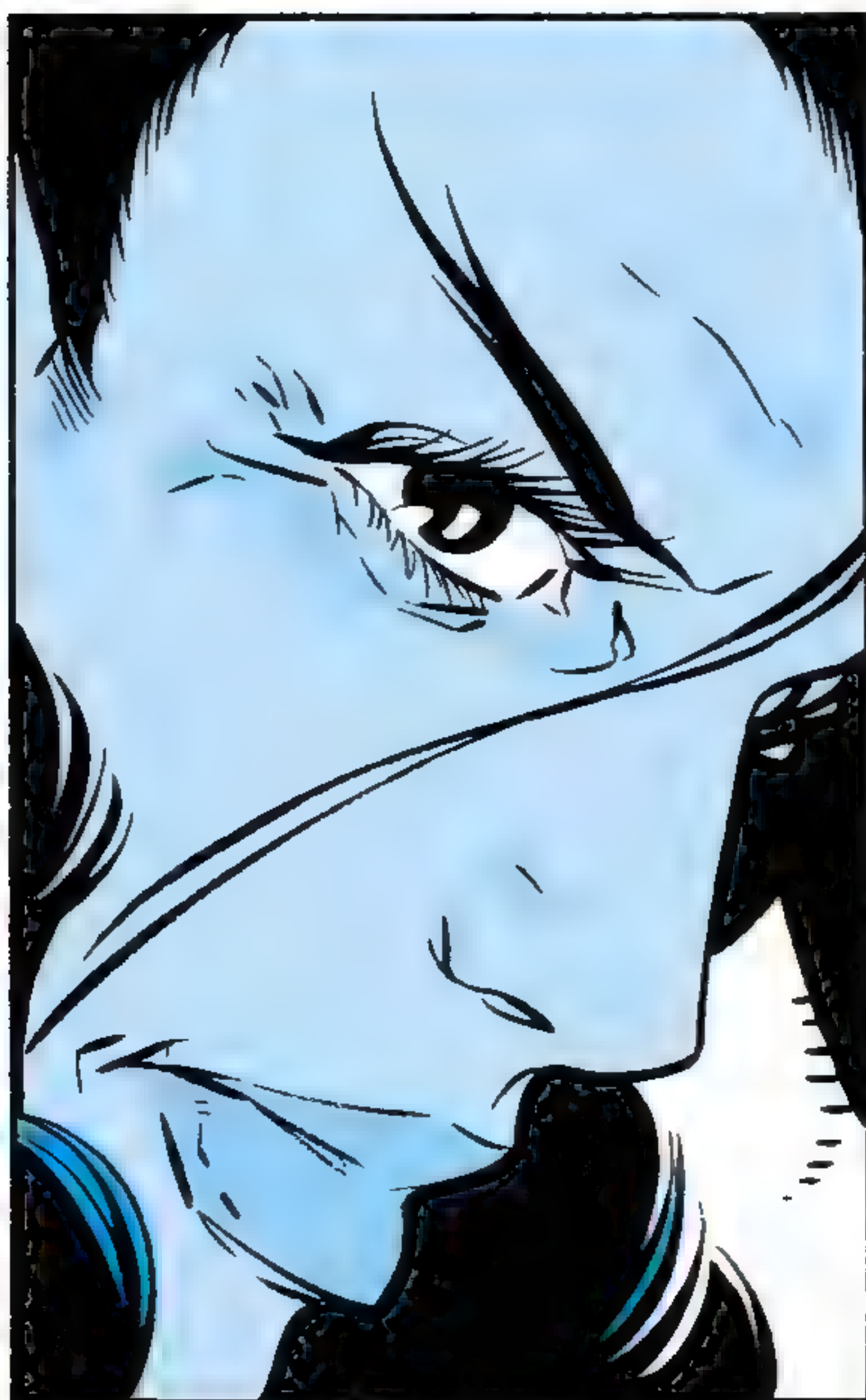


SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO LEAD US TO MON-EL, YOU KNOW.



COME ON. SHE WAS NEVER GOING TO TALK, EVEN IF THE TRAPPER'D HAD ANY REASON TO TELL HER WHERE HE'D GONE.

NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS OUR ONLY LEAD.

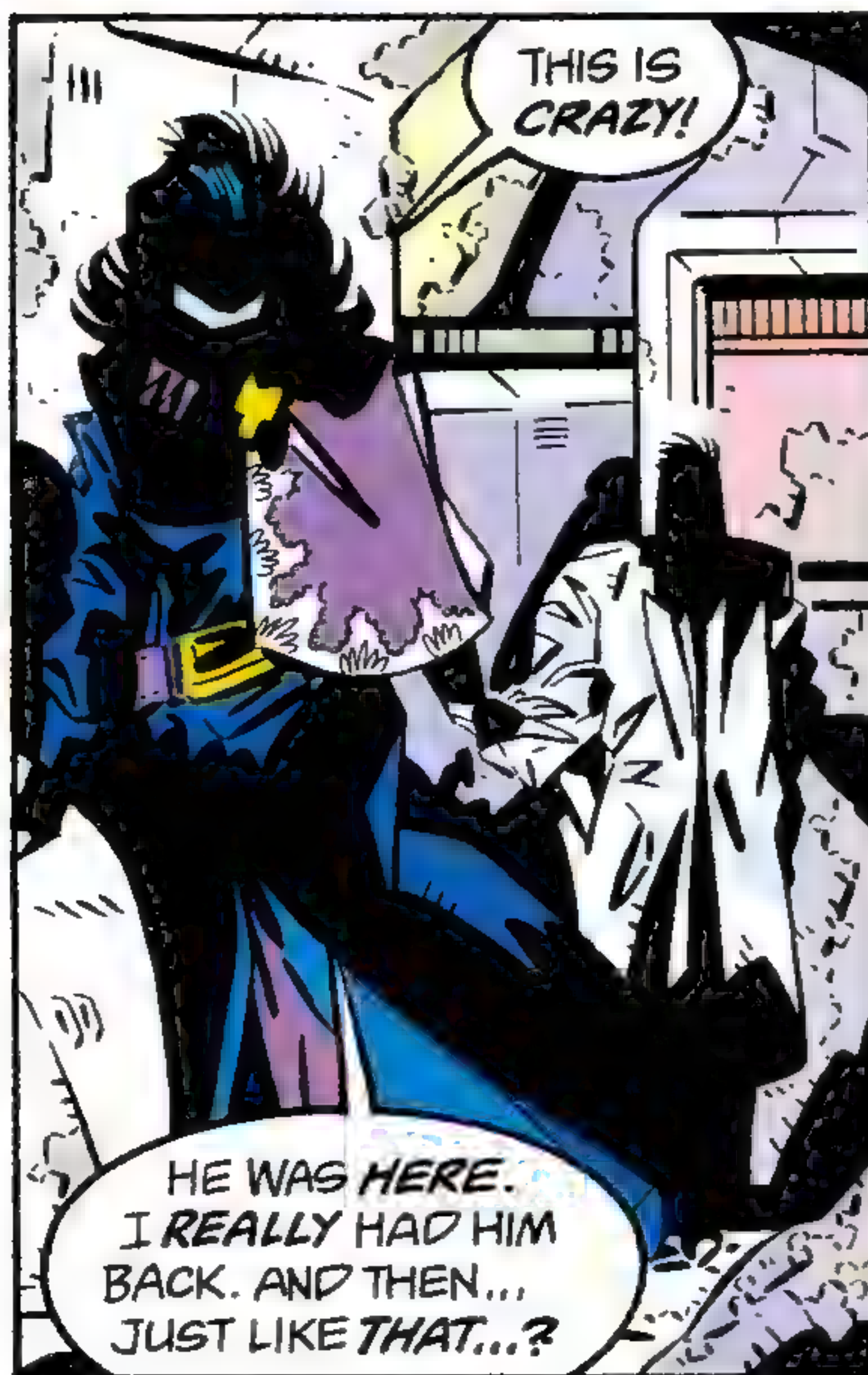


ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU CAN'T COME UP WITH SOMETHING BETTER THAN THAT?



I'M NOT A MIRACLE WORKER.

THE TRAPPER COULD HAVE TAKEN HIM ANYWHERE.



THIS IS CRAZY!

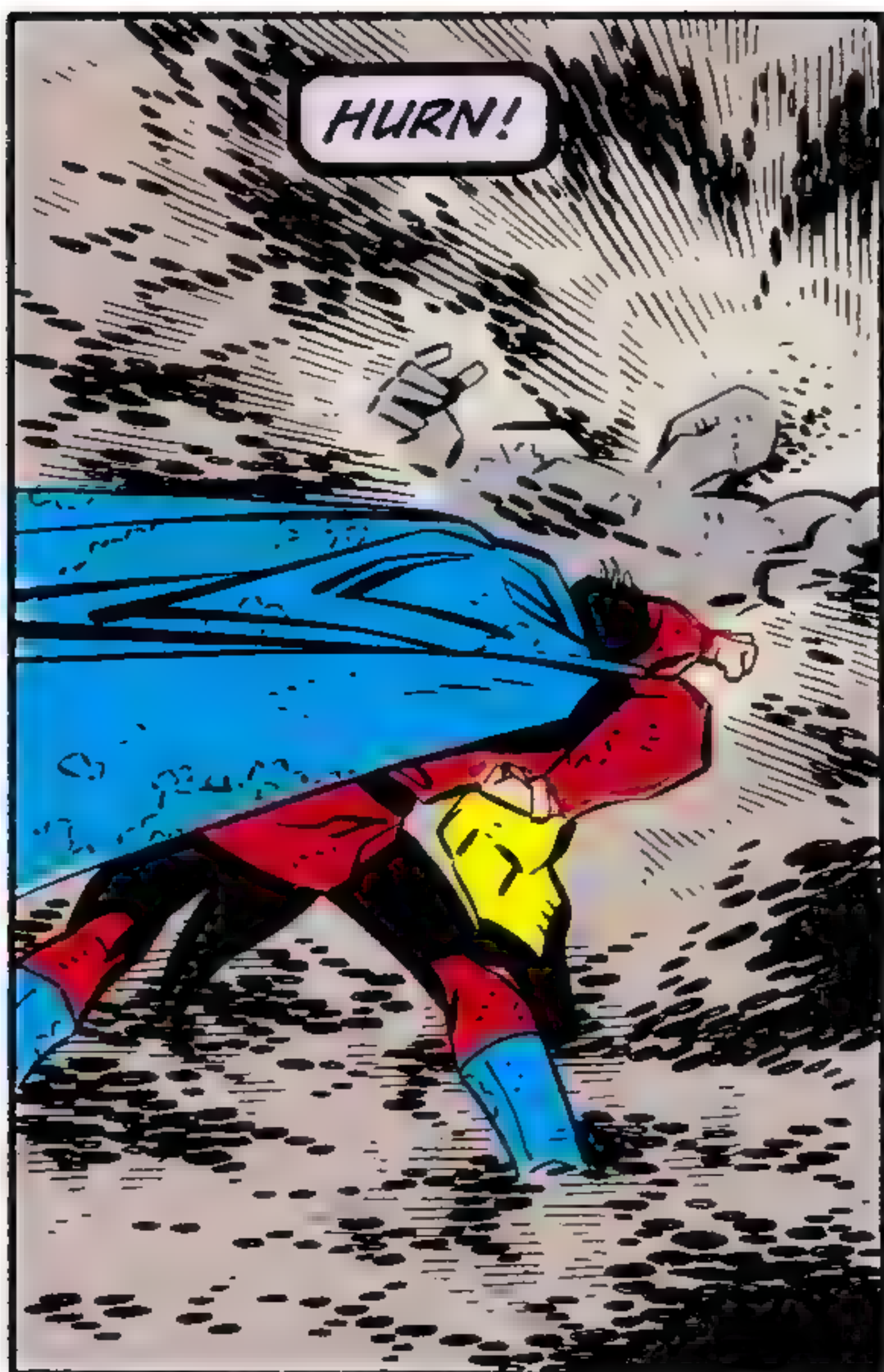
HE WAS HERE. I REALLY HAD HIM BACK. AND THEN... JUST LIKE THAT...?



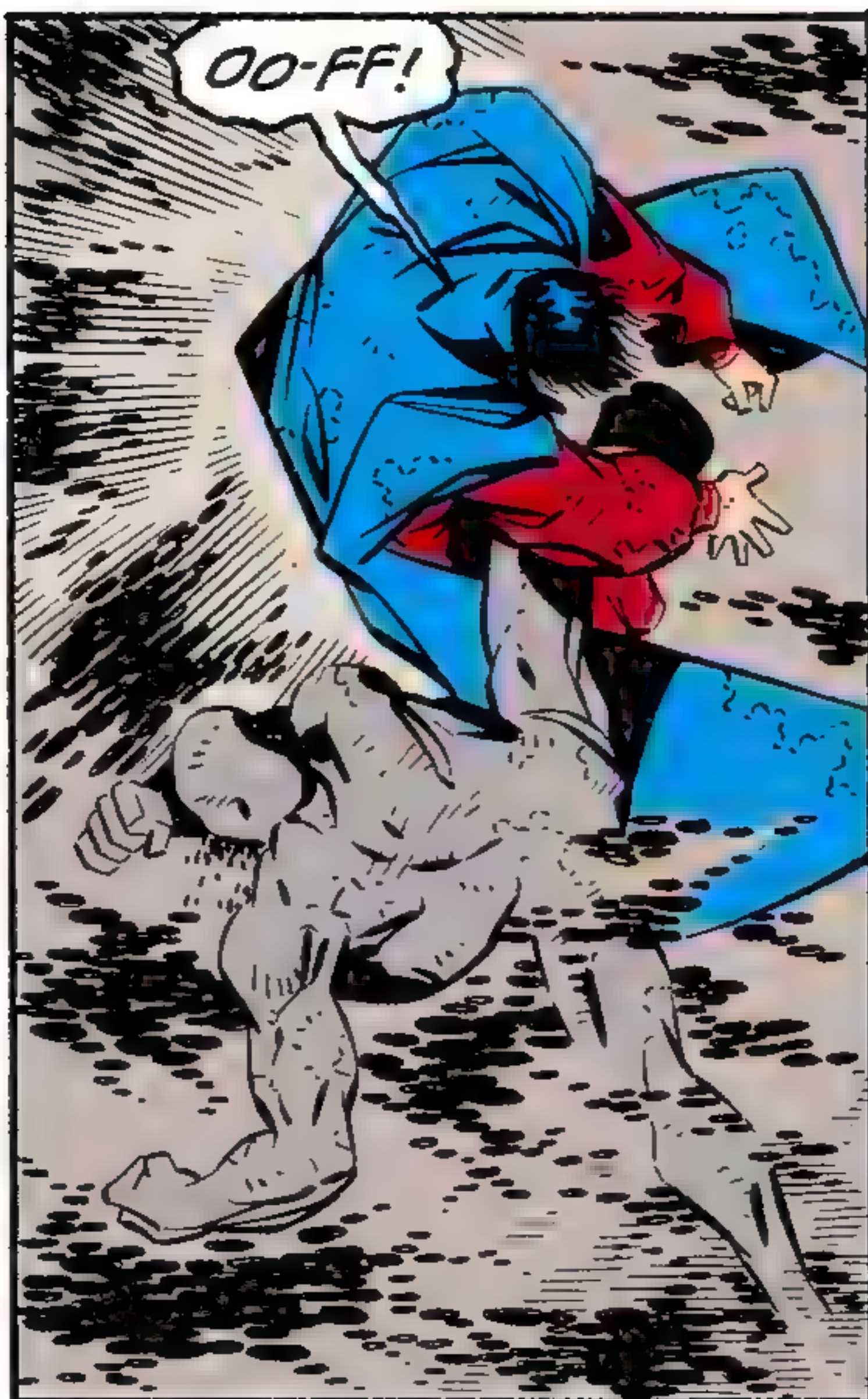
OH, BRAINY, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HIM?



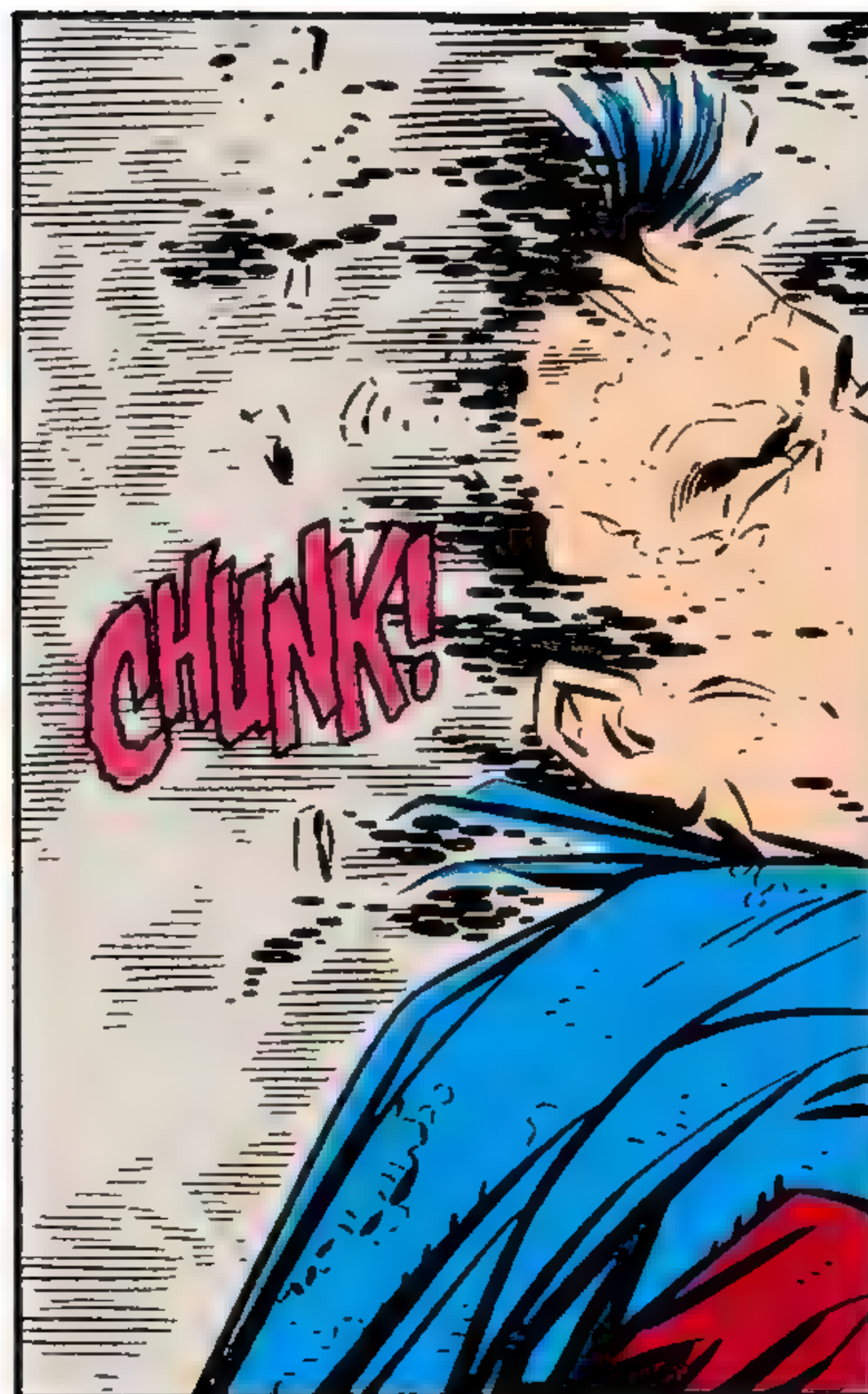
WHEREVER HE IS...IT'S ALL UP TO HIM NOW.



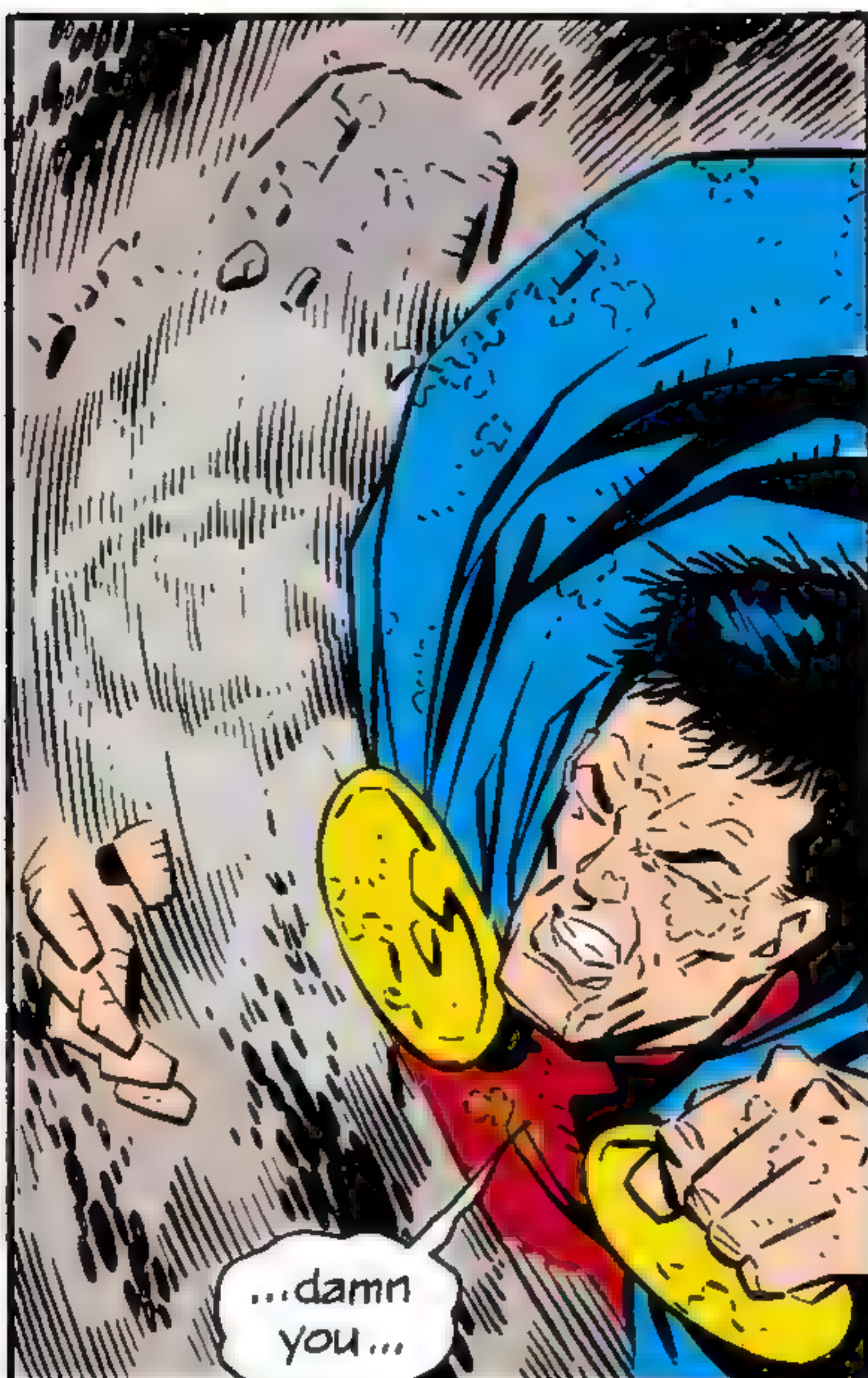
HURN!



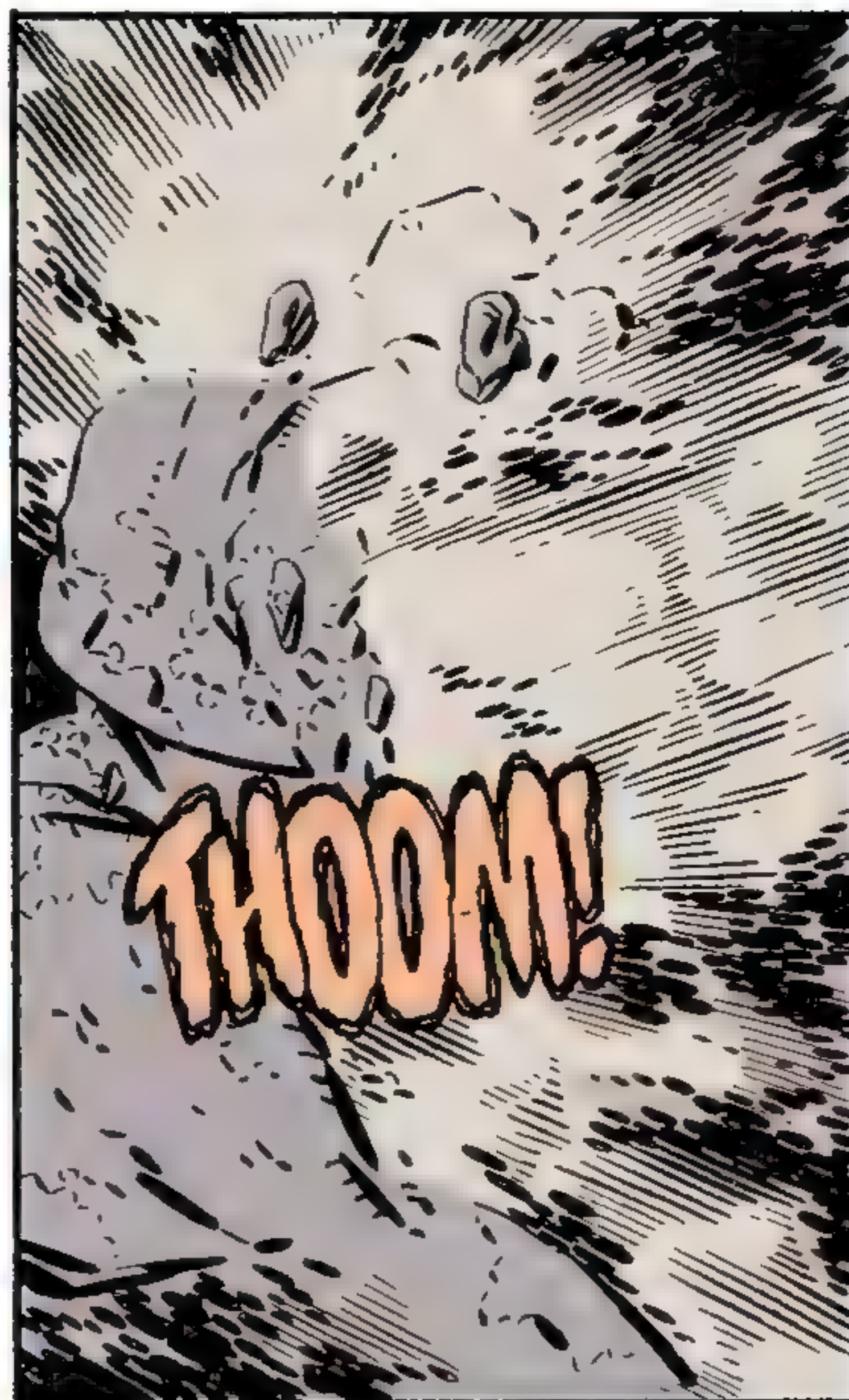
OO-FF!



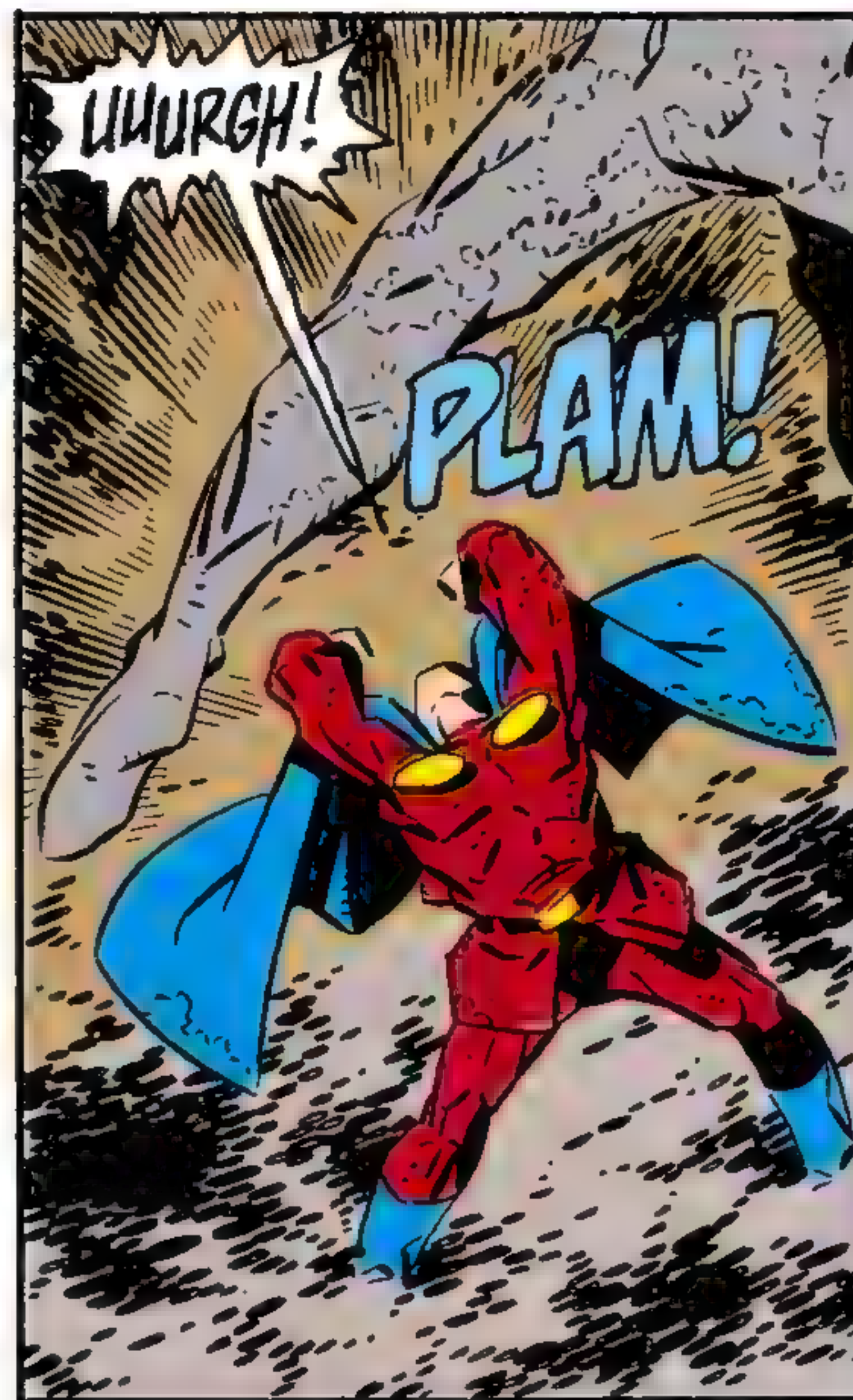
CHUNK!



...damn
you...



THOOM!



UURGH!

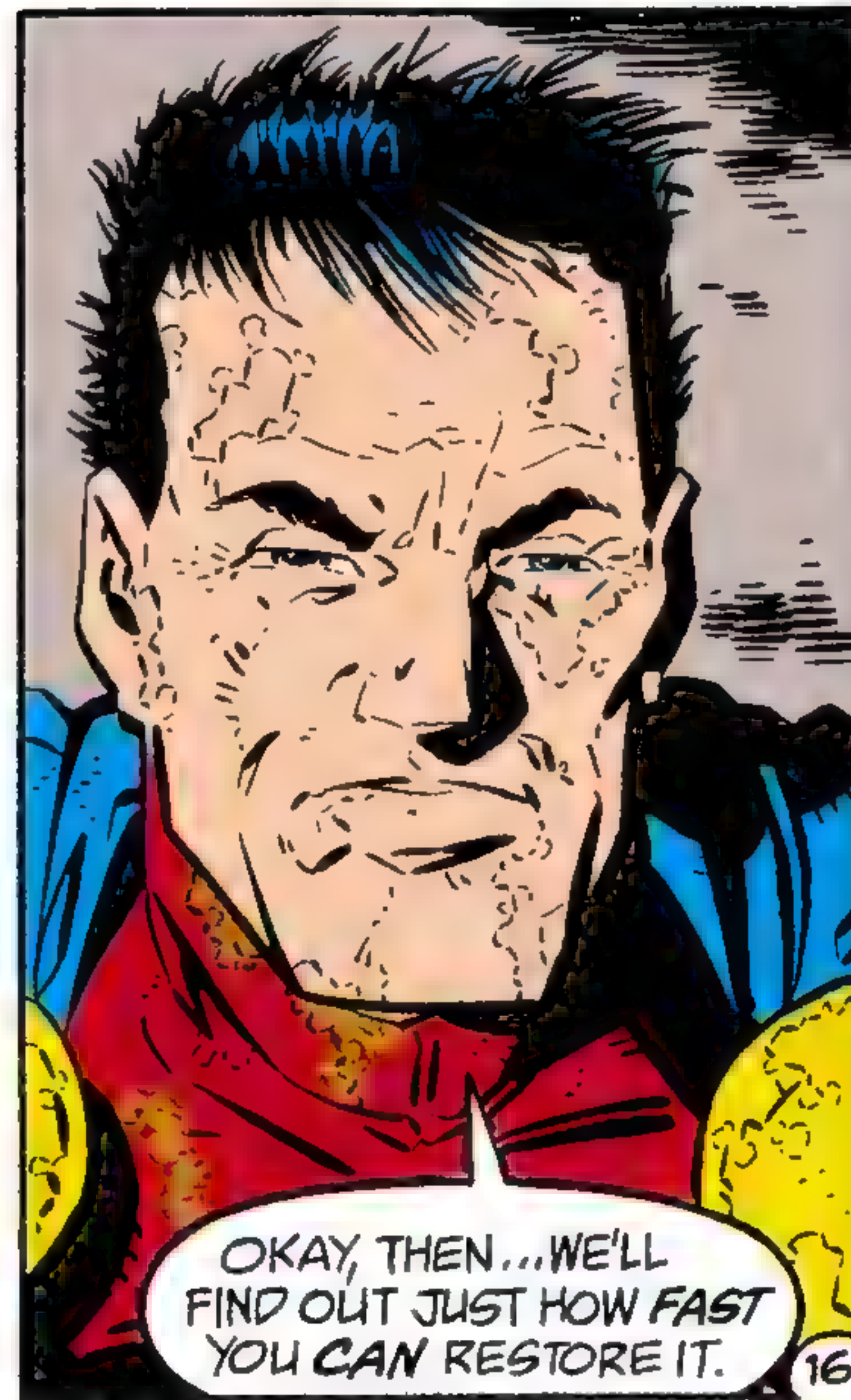
PLAM!



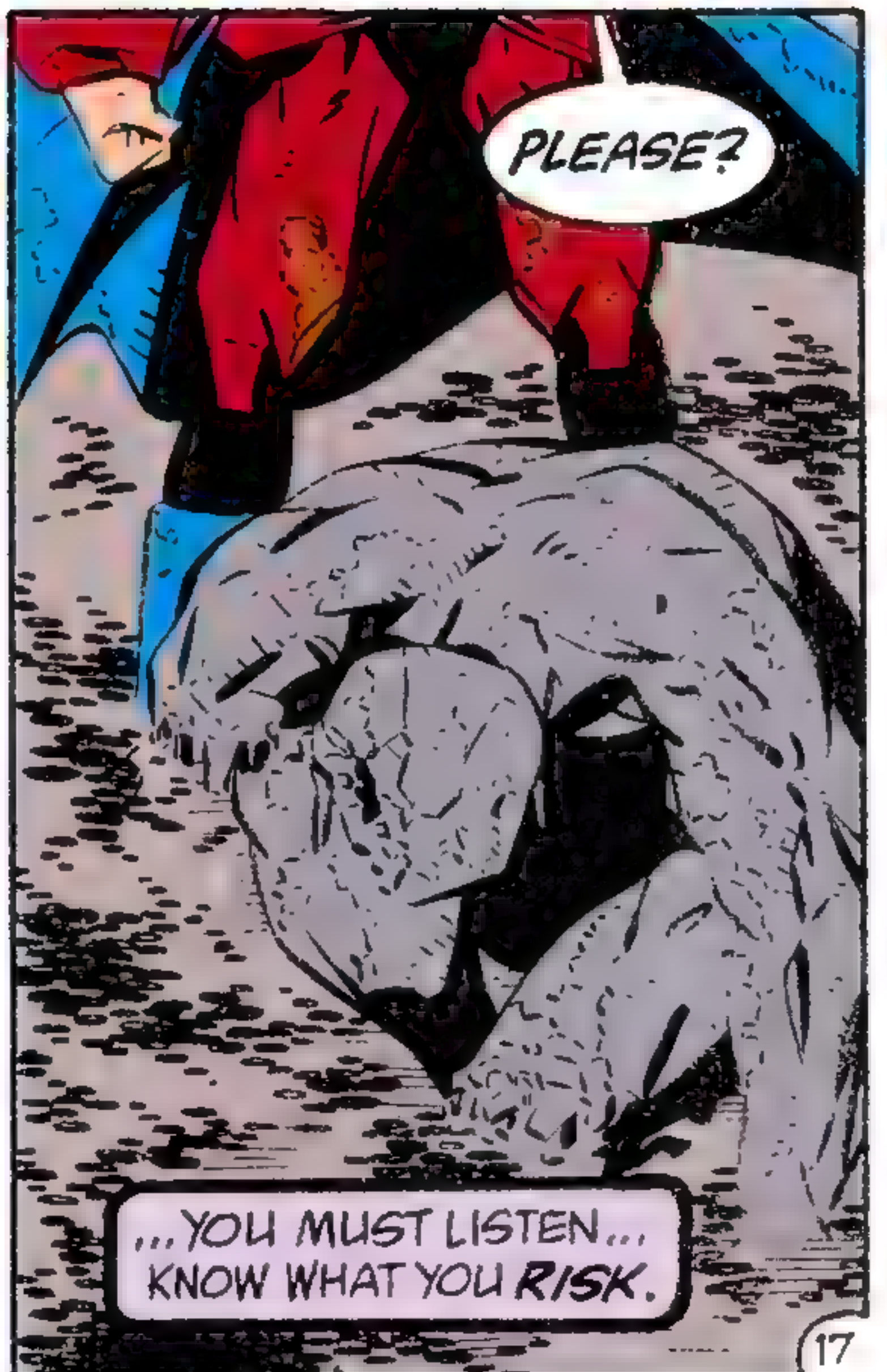
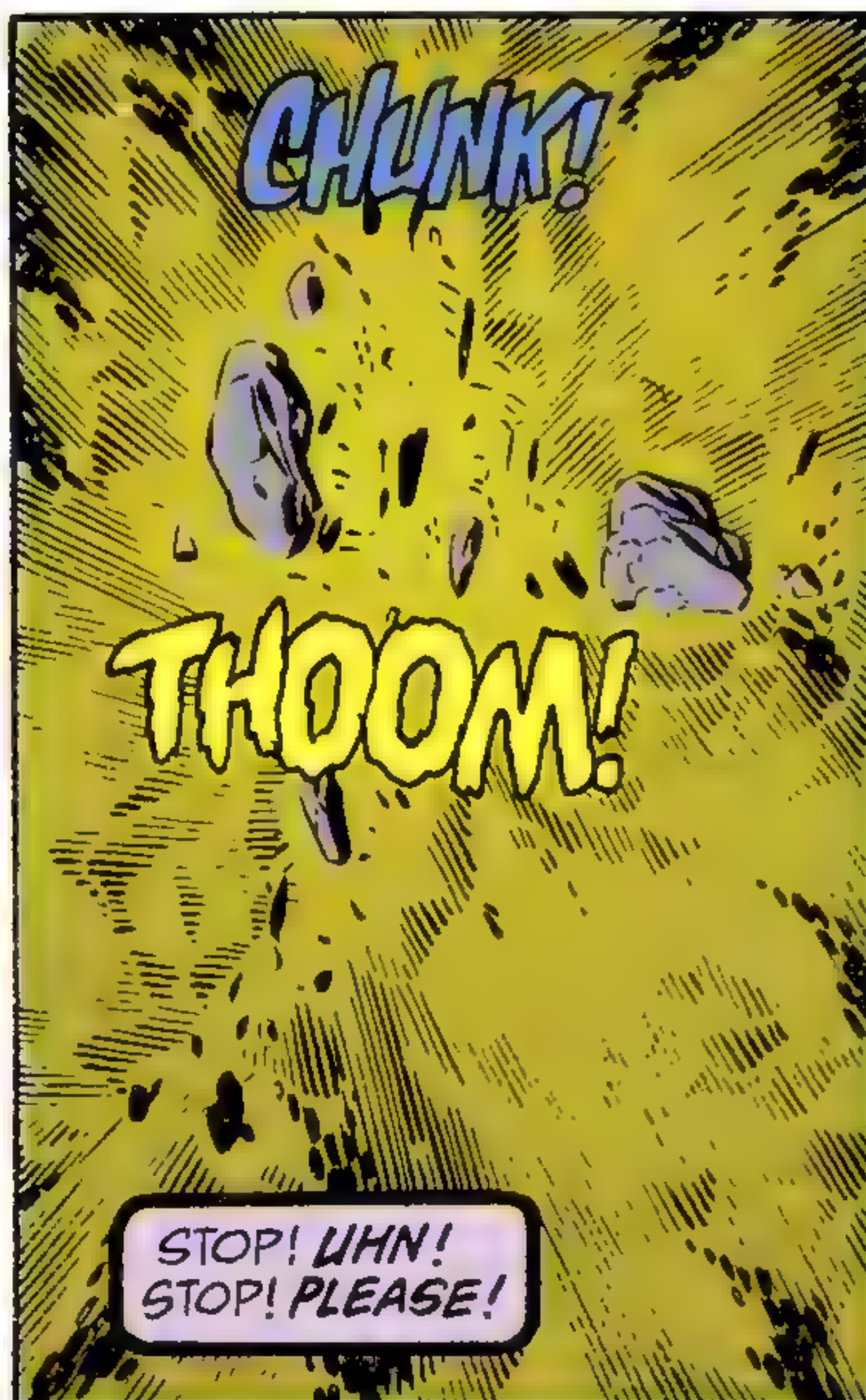
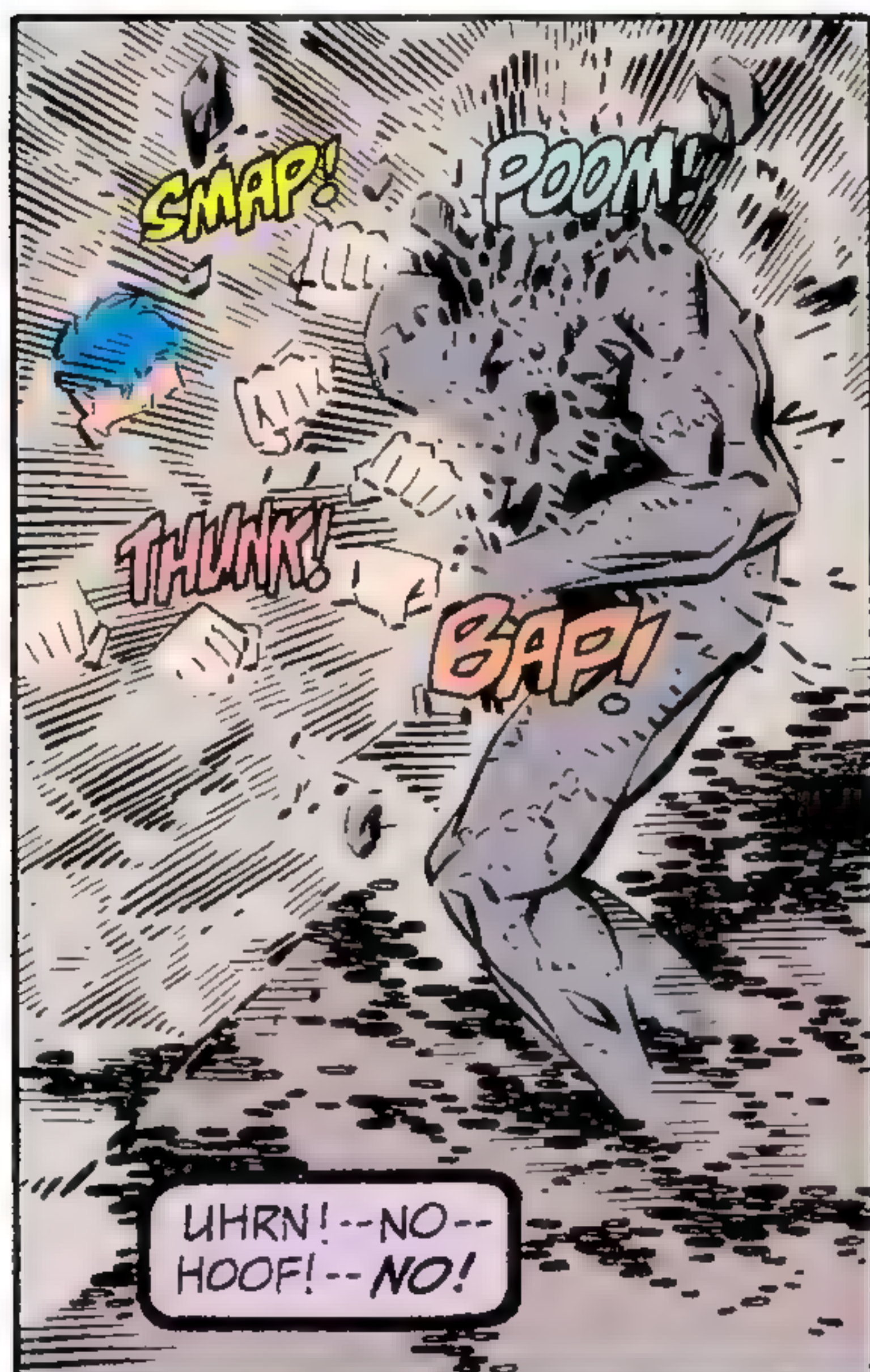
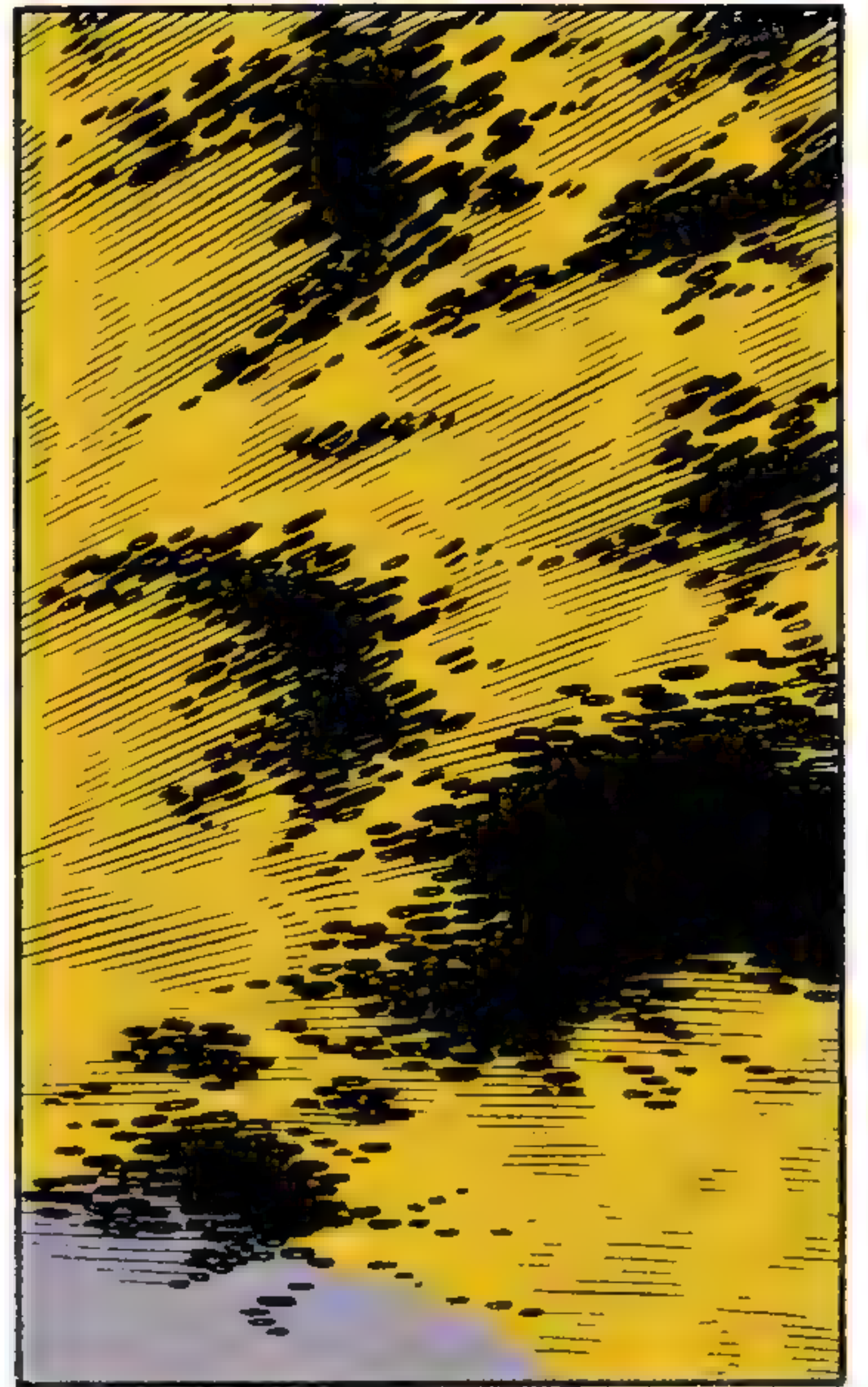
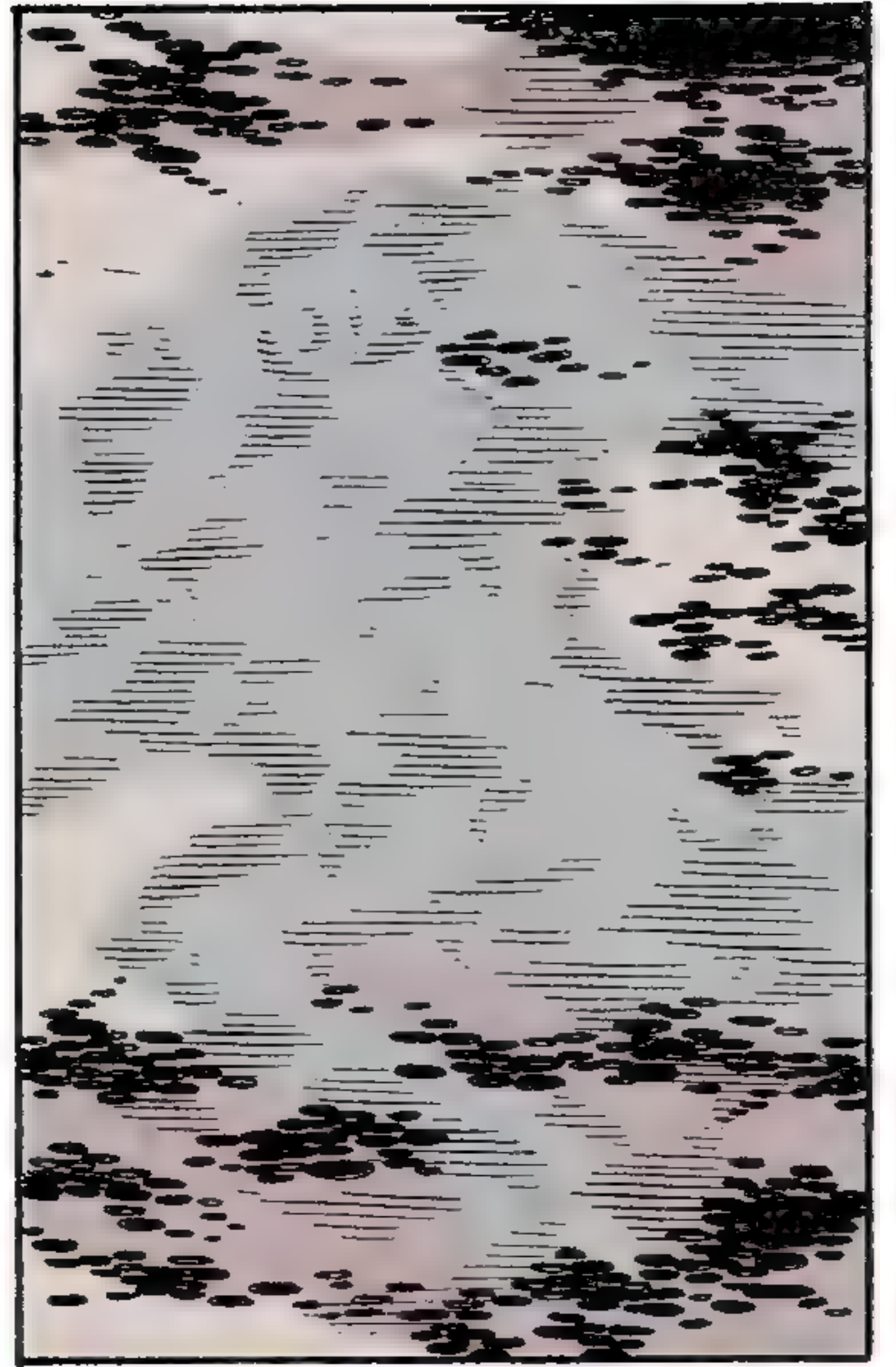
Y-YOU FIGHT...WITH SPIRIT.
BUT AS OFTEN AS YOU
DAMAGE ME...



...I CAN ONCE AGAIN...
RESTORE THIS FORM.



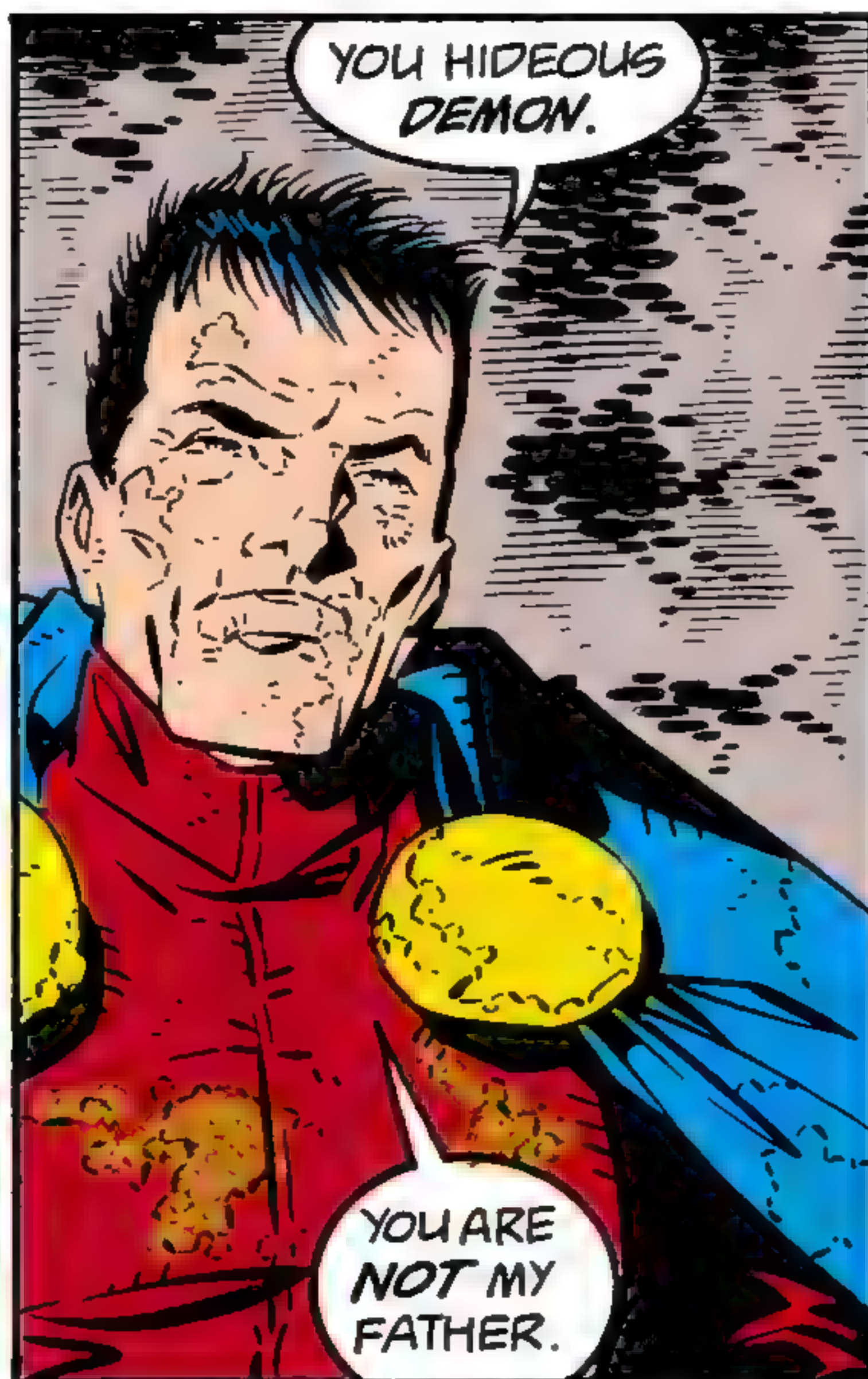
OKAY, THEN...WE'LL
FIND OUT JUST HOW FAST
YOU CAN RESTORE IT.





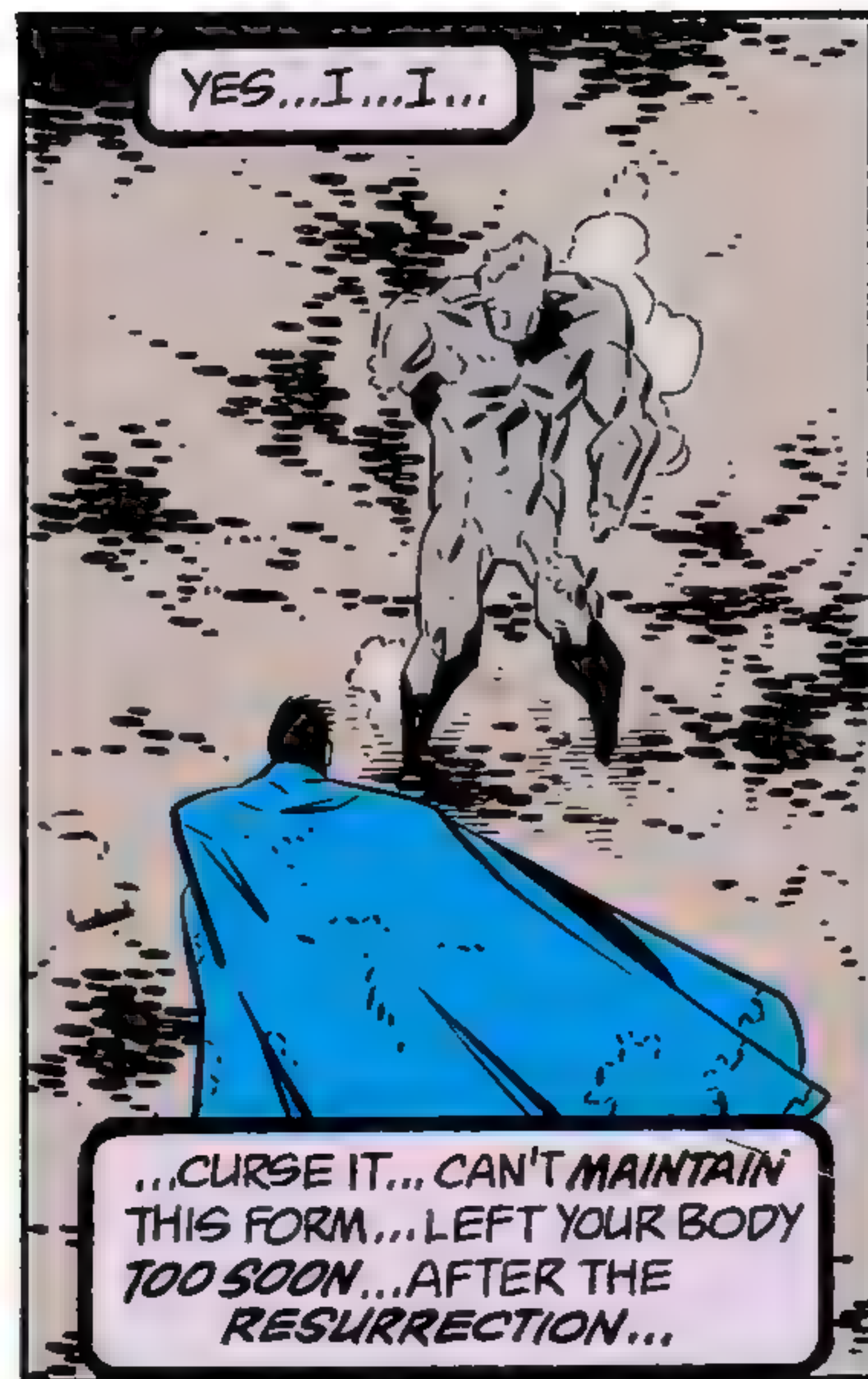
BLAST!...YOUR "DEATH"...FIVE
YEAR SLEEP...SHOULD'VE
WEAKENED YOU MORE...

I...MADE YOU TOO
WELL...MY SON.



YOU HIDEOUS
DEMON.

YOU ARE
NOT MY
FATHER.



YES...I...I...

...CURSE IT... CAN'T MAINTAIN
THIS FORM... LEFT YOUR BODY
TOO SOON... AFTER THE
RESURRECTION...



...OVER-EXTENDED MYSELF...

THAT'LL BE
YOUR LAST
MISTAKE,
TRAPPER.



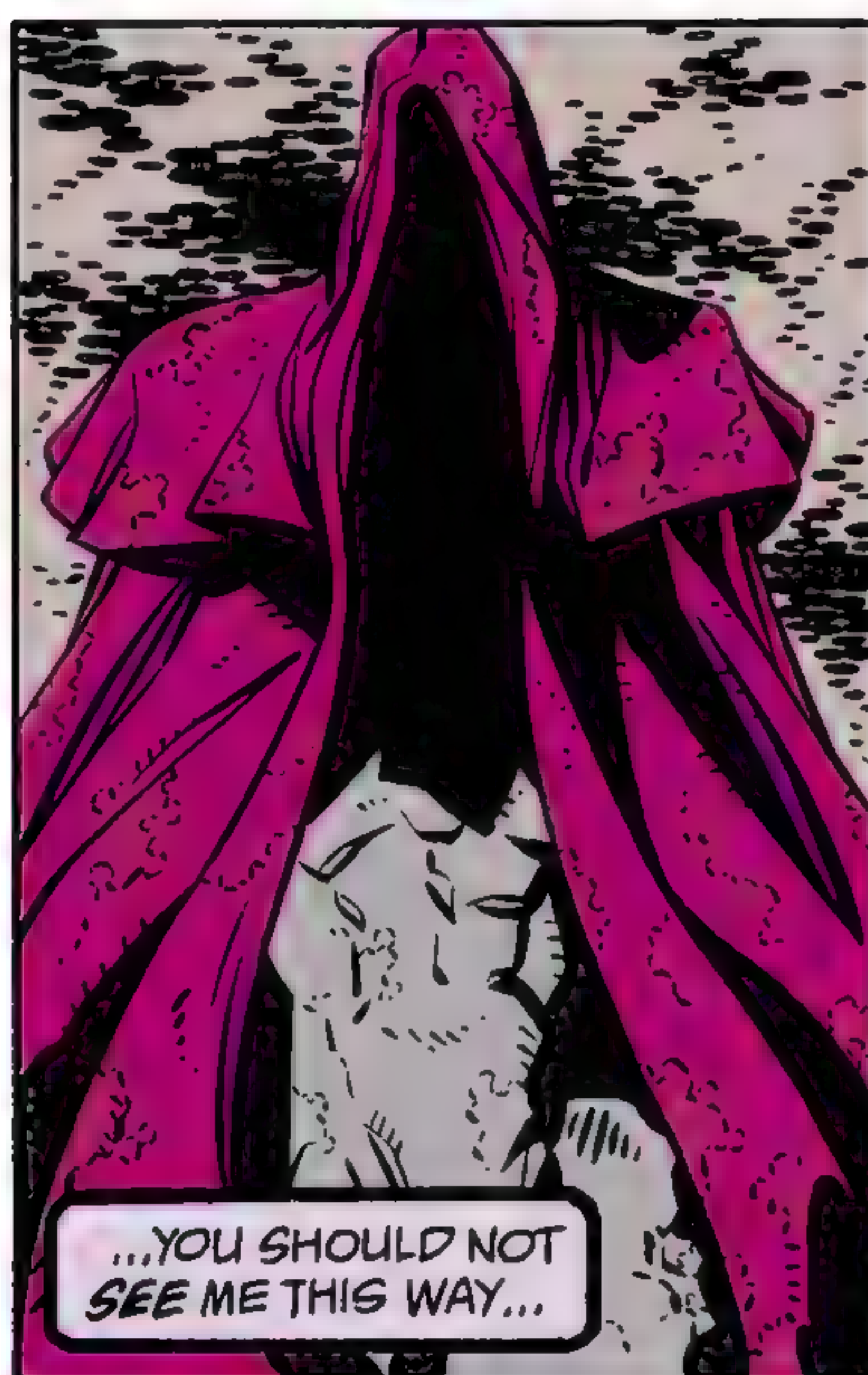
NO...MY SON...YOU
CANNOT KILL ME...

...YOU DARE NOT...



...FOR ALL THAT YOU HOLD
DEAR-- AUGHN!

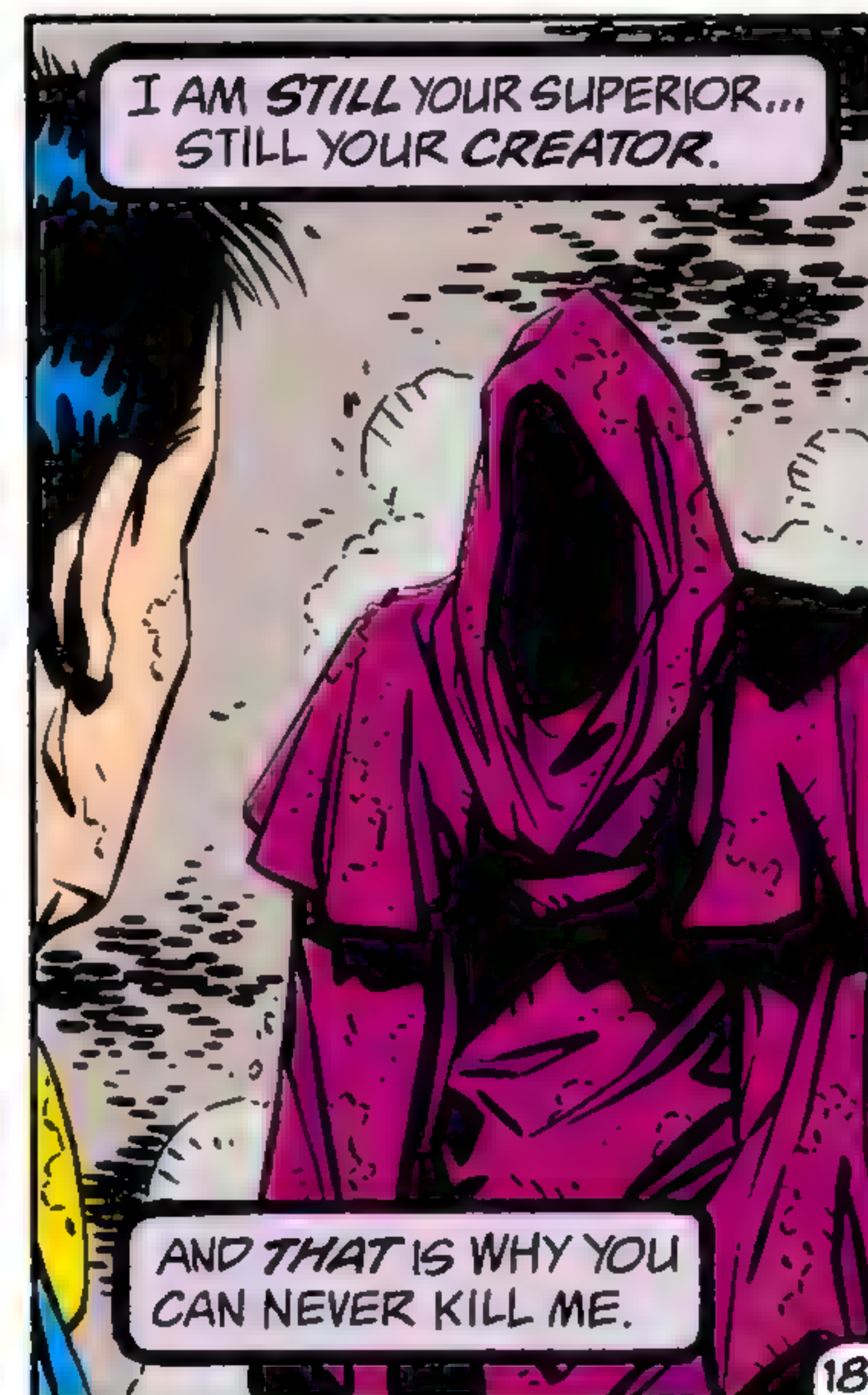
...UHN... THIS IS NOT...
APPROPRIATE...



...YOU SHOULD NOT
SEE ME THIS WAY...



...I don't
give a damn
WHAT you
look like...



I AM *STILL* YOUR SUPERIOR...
STILL YOUR CREATOR.

AND THAT IS WHY YOU
CAN NEVER KILL ME.



...YOU GEE...I AM ENTROPY...
I WILL ALWAYS...INEVITABLY...
RULE AT THE END OF TIME...



...BUT MY AMBITION...TO RULE
THE POPULATED EONS...

...WAS THWARTED BY THE
RISE OF MAGIC...BY THE
REIGN OF MORDRU...



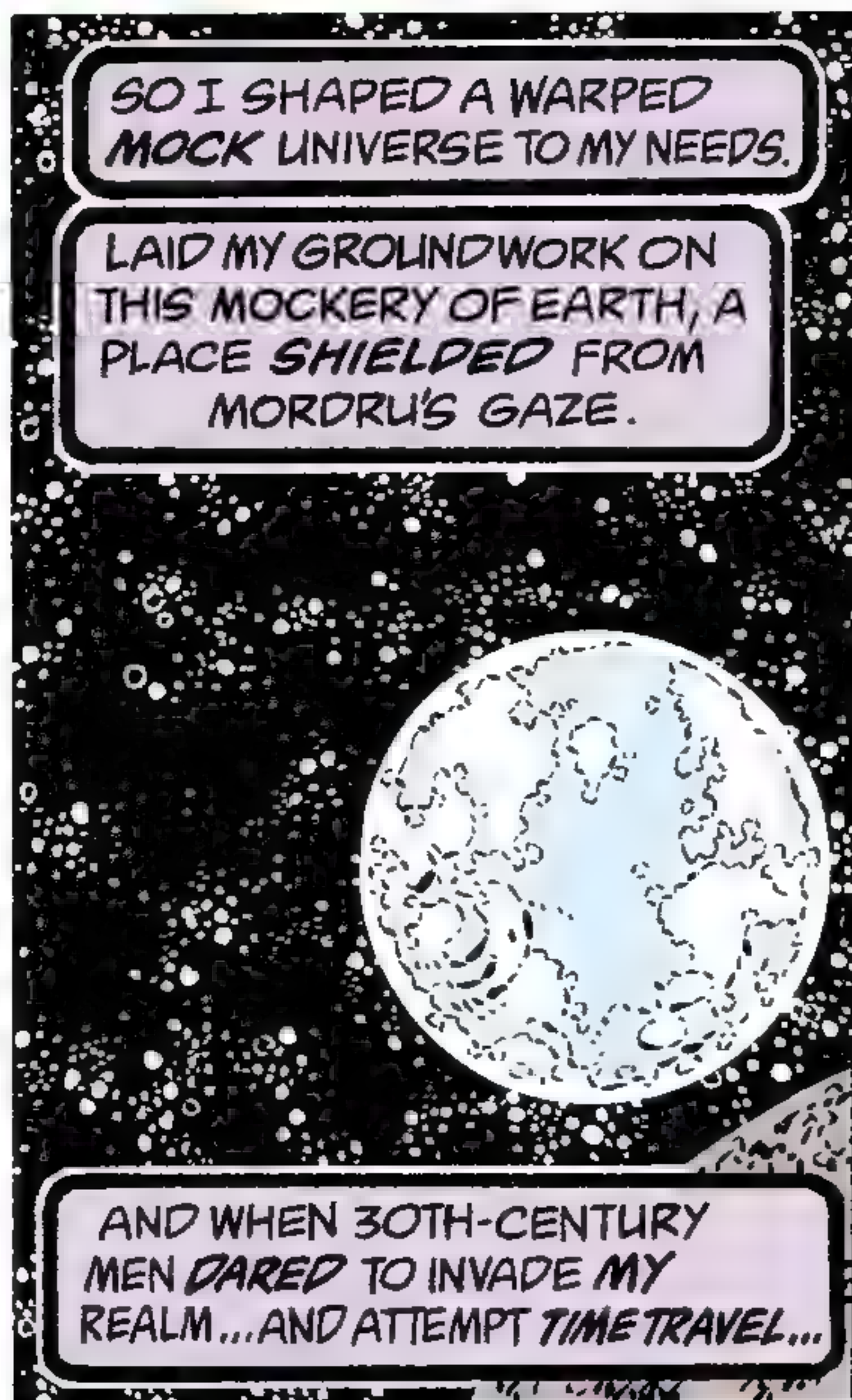
WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW...
CHILD...IS THAT BEFORE I
CREATED...YOU AND YOUR
BROTHERS...TO OPPOSE
HIM...

MORDRU WAS
DESTINED TO RISE AND
CONQUER ALL. TO RULE
THE UNIVERSE...FOR
A MILLENNIUM.



THAT COULD NOT BE
ALLOWED TO HAPPEN.

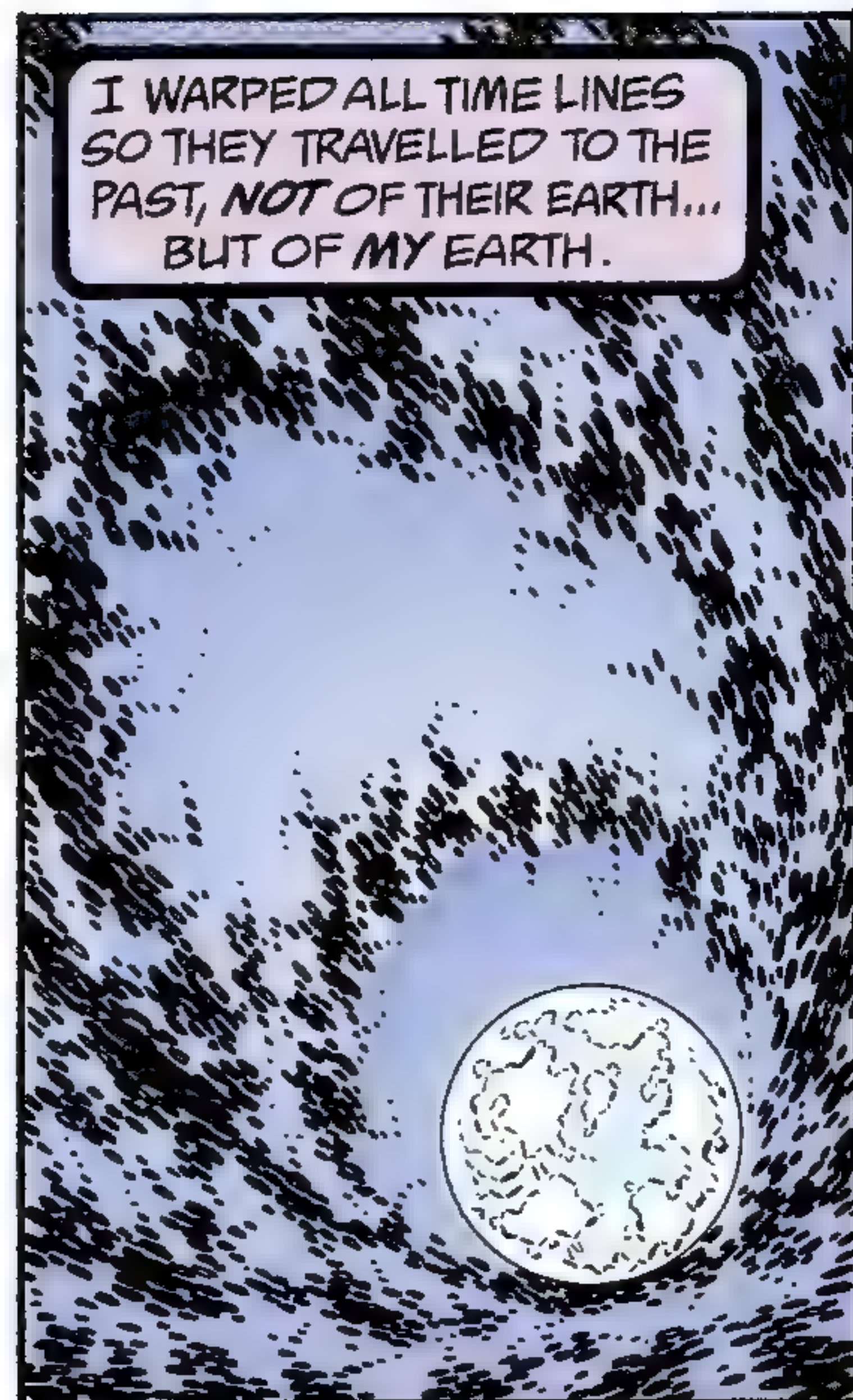
I SET IN MOTION MY
PLANS. BUT TOOLS CRAFTED
IN THIS REALITY WOULD
BE NOTICED BY MORDRU.



SO I SHAPED A WARPED
MOCK UNIVERSE TO MY NEEDS.

LAID MY GROUNDWORK ON
THIS MOCKERY OF EARTH, A
PLACE SHIELDED FROM
MORDRU'S GAZE.

AND WHEN 30TH-CENTURY
MEN DARED TO INVADE MY
REALM...AND ATTEMPT TIME TRAVEL...



I WARPED ALL TIME LINES
SO THEY TRAVELLED TO THE
PAST, NOT OF THEIR EARTH...
BUT OF MY EARTH.



THERE THEY FOUND A TIMELESS
LEGEND OF TEEN VALOR...OF
MY MAKING.



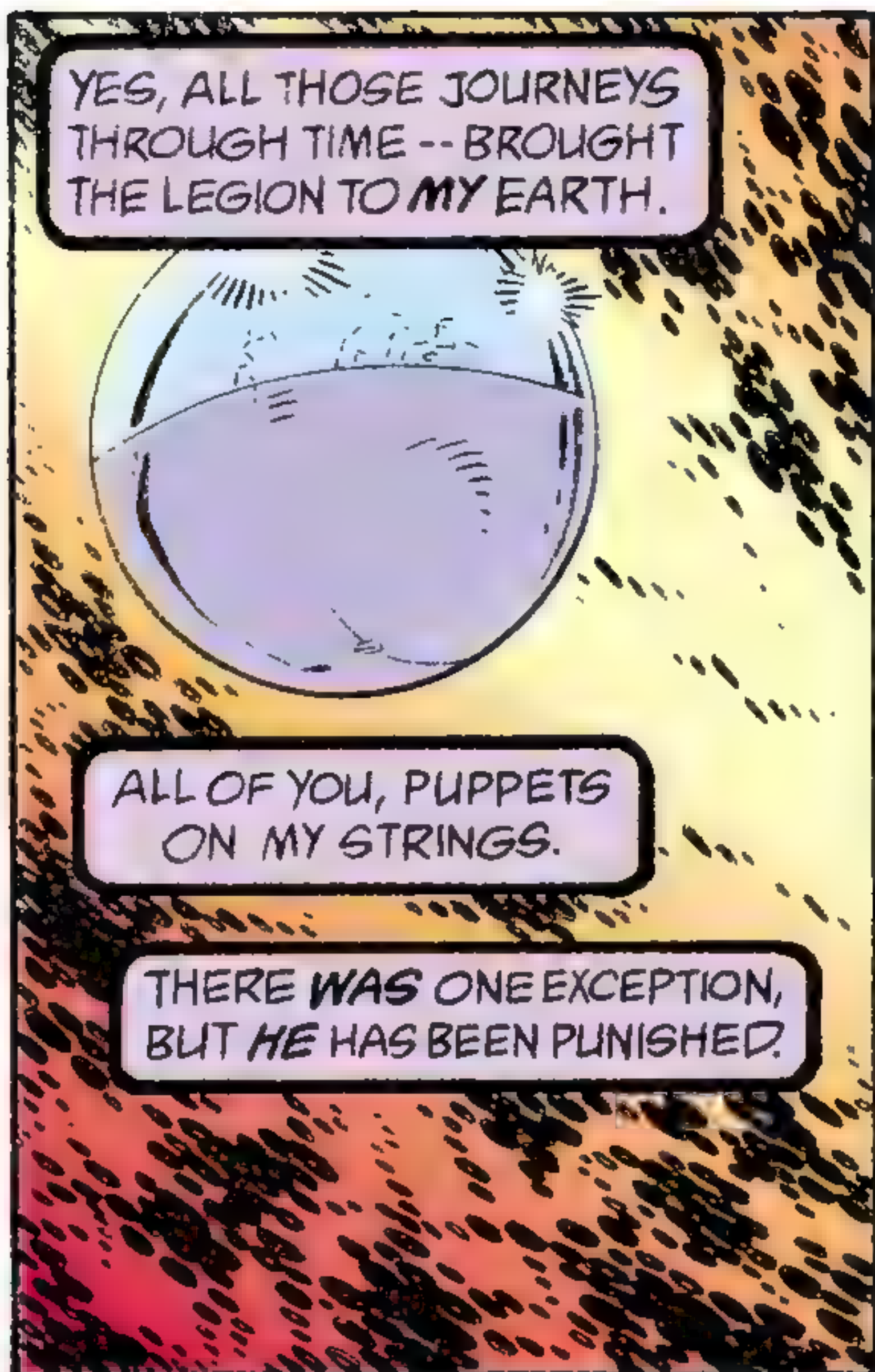
I, IN TURN, MOVED THROUGH
TIME A GREAT FINANCIER WHO
FOUND INSPIRATION IN THAT
LEGEND.



AND AFTER YOUR
THOUSAND-YEAR EXILE,
YOU WERE DELIVERED
TO THEM AS WELL.

WITH THE INSPIRATIONAL
LEGENDS...THE FINANCIER...
YOUR GREAT POWERS ALL
IN PLACE...

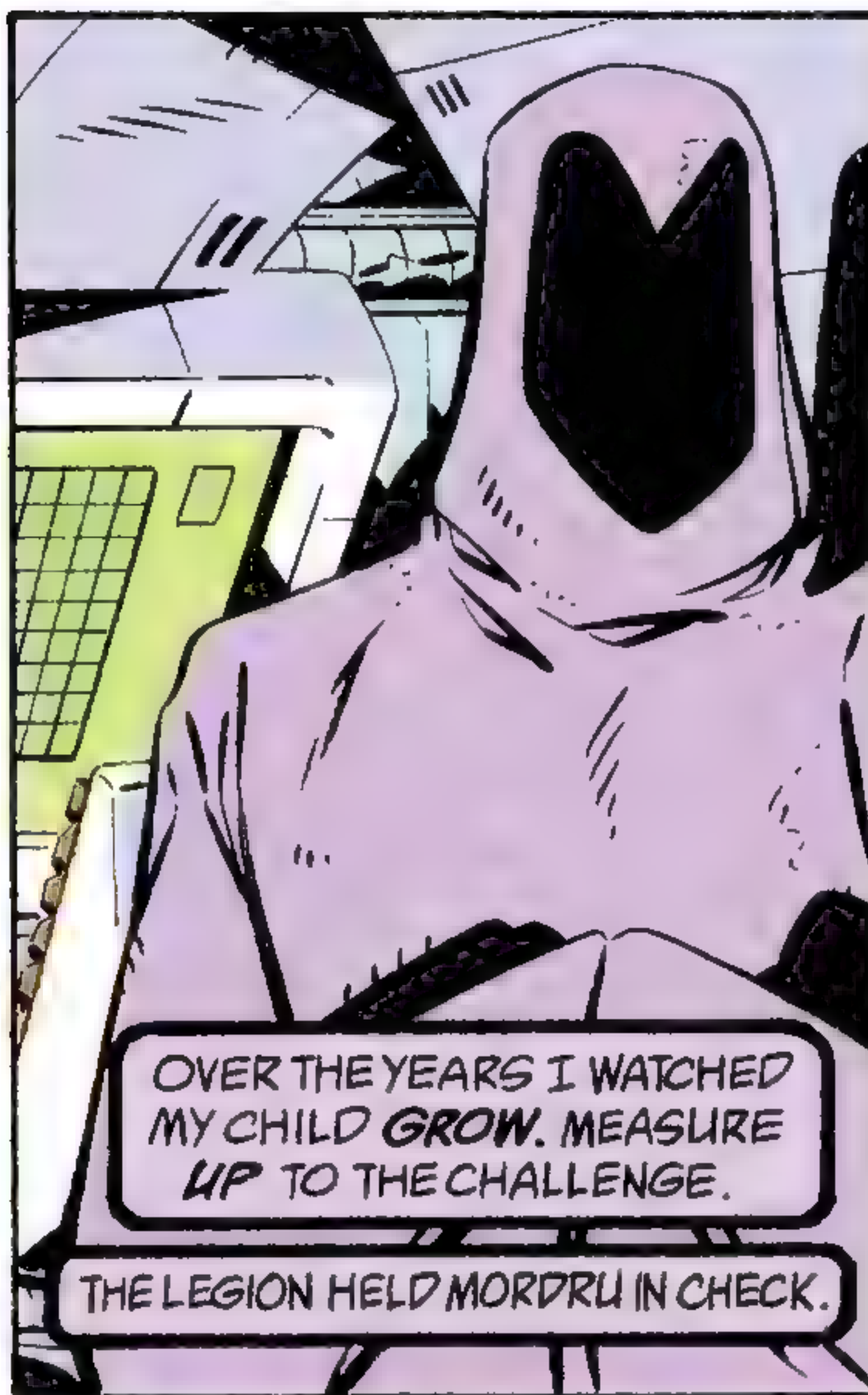
MY CHILD, THE LEGION OF
SUPER-HEROES, WAS BORN.



YES, ALL THOSE JOURNEYS
THROUGH TIME -- BROUGHT
THE LEGION TO MY EARTH.

ALL OF YOU, PUPPETS
ON MY STRINGS.

THERE *WAS* ONE EXCEPTION,
BUT *HE* HAS BEEN PUNISHED.



OVER THE YEARS I WATCHED
MY CHILD *GROW*. MEASURE
UP TO THE CHALLENGE.

THE LEGION HELD MORDRU IN CHECK.



AND DEFEATED MANY,
MANY OTHERS.



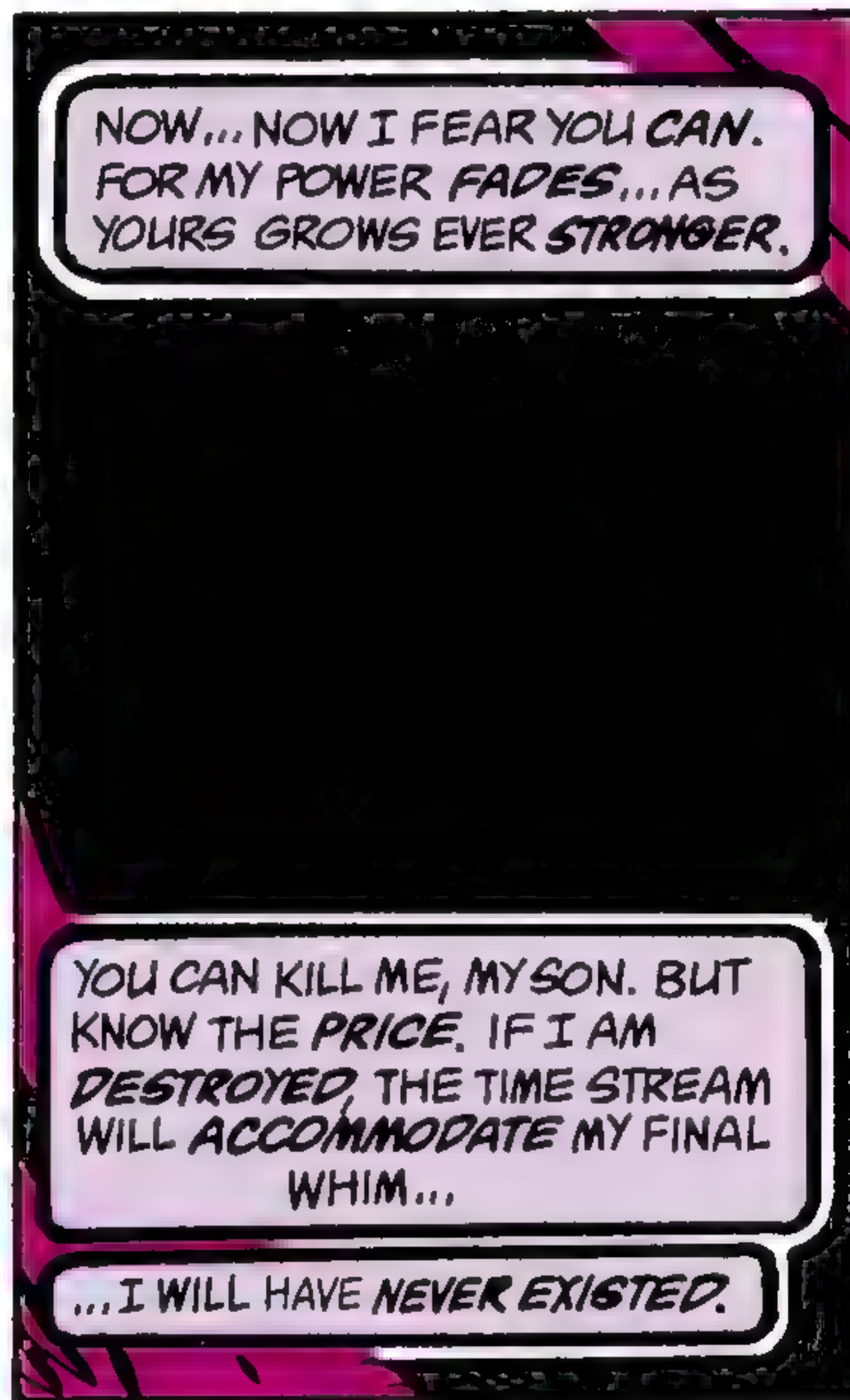
BUT I NEVER REALIZED YOU
WERE *ALSO* CAPABLE OF
BLOCKING MY RISE, UNTIL
YOU BEAT BACK THE MIGHTY
DARKSEID.

YES, THE PUPPETS NOW
ACTUALLY *THREATENED* THE
PUPPET MASTER! CONFRONTA-
TION WAS INEVITABLE.



THE GREAT WAR BETWEEN US
ENSUED. FIVE YEARS AGO YOU
BELIEVED, IN YOUR *ARROGANCE*,
THAT YOU'D *DESTROYED* ME.

BUT YOU
COULD NOT.



NOW... NOW I FEAR YOU *CAN*.
FOR MY POWER *FADES*... AS
YOURS GROWS EVER *STRONGER*.

YOU CAN KILL ME, MY SON. BUT
KNOW THE *PRICE*. IF I AM
DESTROYED, THE TIME STREAM
WILL *ACCOMMODATE* MY FINAL
WHIM...

...I WILL HAVE *NEVER EXISTED*.



IF YOU *DESTROY* ME THIS DAY,
I WILL *VANISH* FROM *REALITY*,
PAST AND PRESENT.

ALL MY HANDIWORK WILL BE
UNDONE. THIS MOCK UNIVERSE
WILL *EXIST*... BUT THE SEEDS
I PLANTED HERE... YOU... WILL
NEVER COME TO FRUITION.

WITHOUT MY INTERVENTION, 30TH-
CENTURY MAN WILL *NEVER* HAVE
ENTERED THE MOCK UNIVERSE.

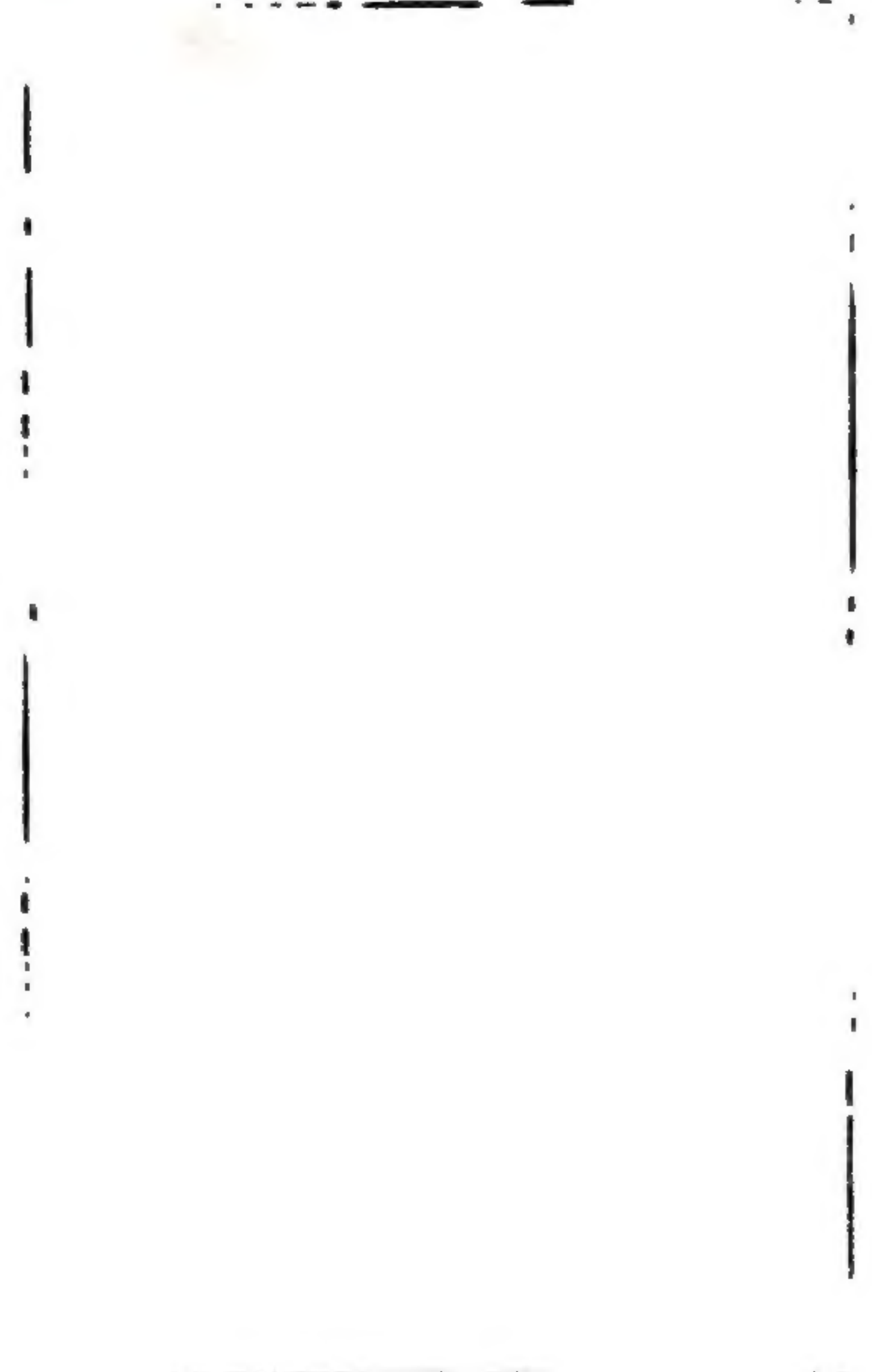
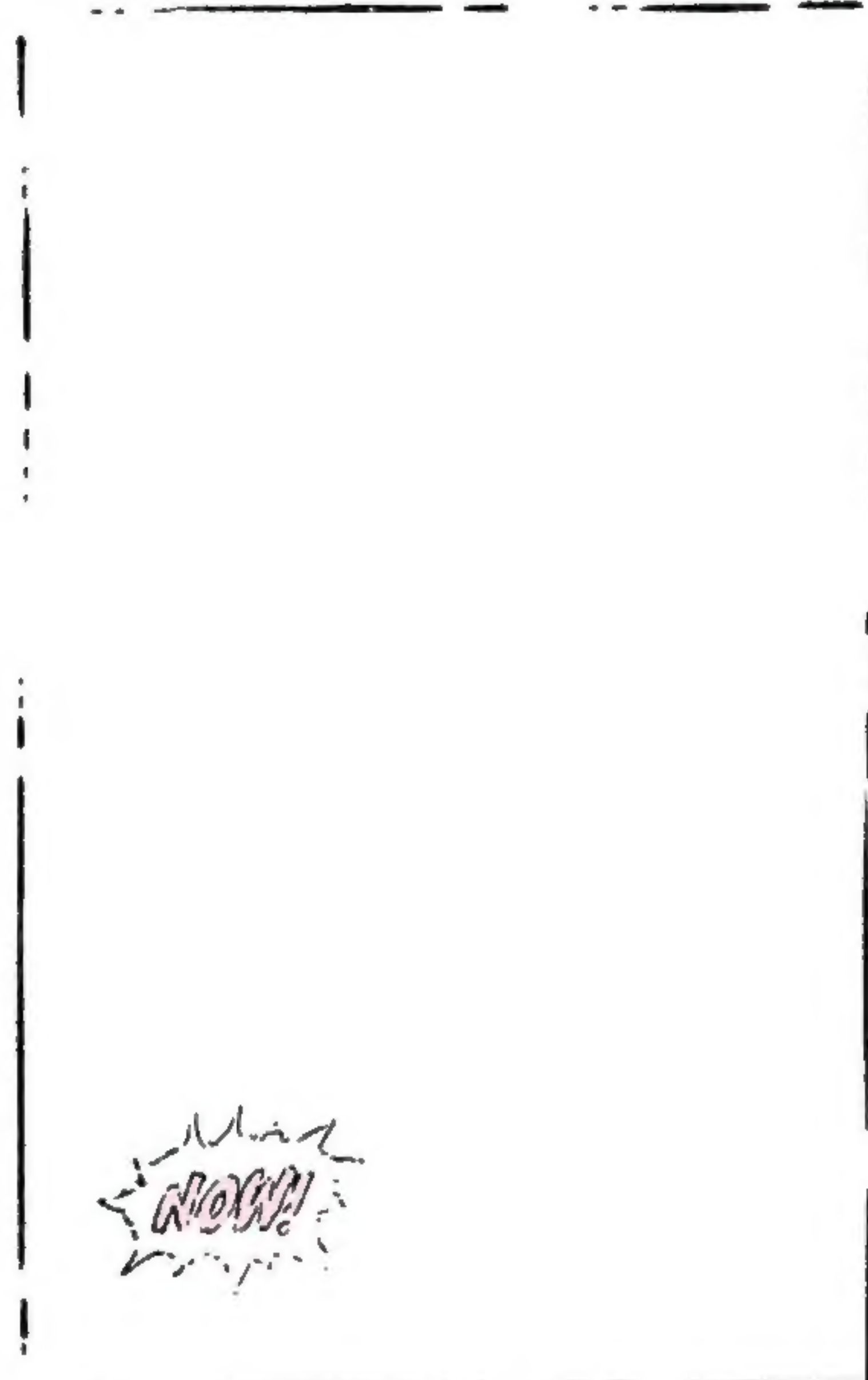
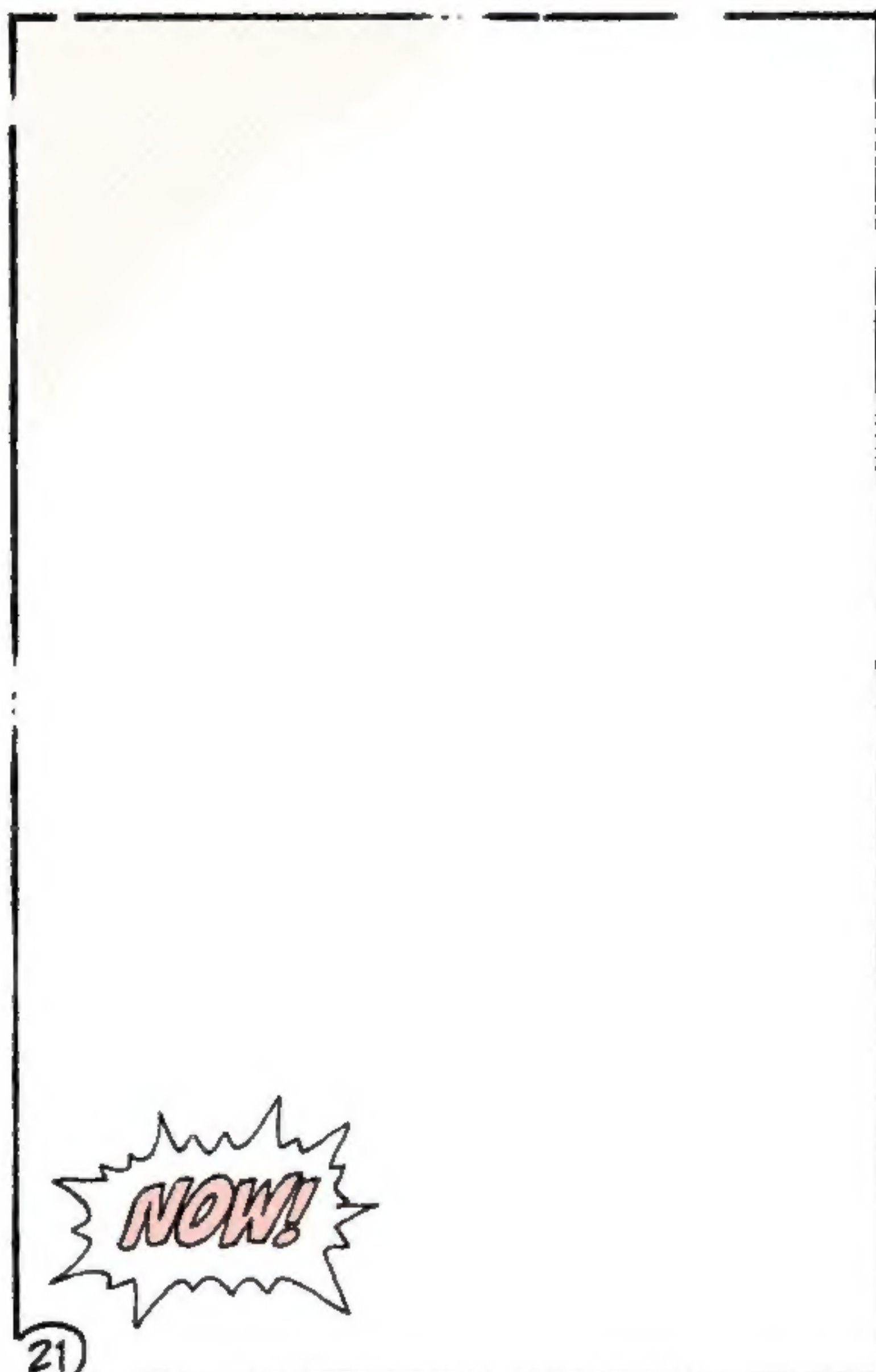
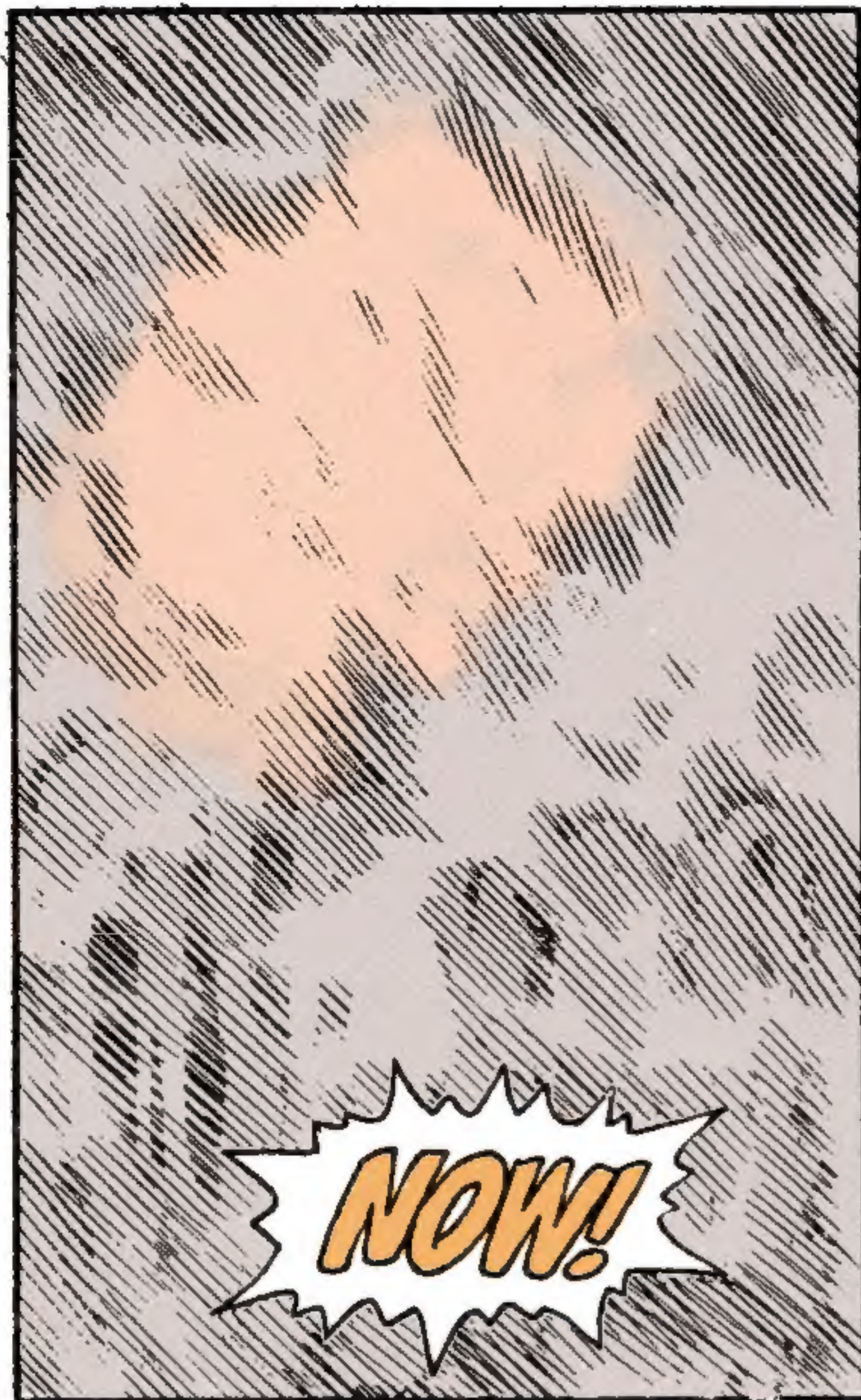


AND THE EVENTS THAT
CAUSED THE FORMATION
OF THE LEGION... WILL
NEVER HAVE OCCURED.

KILL ME, AND YOU AND
EVERYTHING YOU HOLD
DEAR WILL BE *GONE*.



AND THAT IS A SACRIFICE
TOO GREAT FOR YOU TO
MAKE.



KEITH GIFFEN
STORY & PENCILS
TOM & MARY
BIERBAUM
STORY ASSIST
& DIALOGUE
AL GORDON
STORY ASSIST
& INKS
TODD KLEIN
LETTERER
TOM McCRAW
COLORIST
MARK WAID
EDITOR



TITAN IN A CHINA SHOP:

The Unauthorized Biography of Mon-El

By Baretta West



((scroll up for previous text))

would never acknowledge it publicly, it was an open secret among Talok VIII's upper administrators that his death ultimately brought more relief than grief to Tasmia's scarred psyche.

They say that's why Tasmia failed so completely as planetary champion when she returned to Talok VIII after the Mystic Wars, and why she's now retreated to the seclusion of the Abbey of the Ancestors.

While his Legion friends continue to paint the picture of a stoic, noble Mon-El, loving toward Tasmia to the end, journalists covering the Legion closely during those final months know different.

Even Tinya Wazzo has been quoted as admitting that before the ill-fated showdown with the Time Trapper, in which Mon-El was mortally wounded, he and Shadow Lass had barely spoken a sentence to each other in weeks.

Wazzo has written off that episode as a manifestation of the grief Mon-El was feeling after the death of the 20th century champion Superboy. But there's convincing evidence Mon-El's psychoses were by this time running rampant. After years of wavering on the brink, this unstable boy-in-a-titan's-body had become a source of constant anxiety to his teammates and friends. Massive, world-threatening tantrums were becoming commonplace.

Kahnya Nahtahnje, Lady Memory and co-prefect of Talok VIII, describes in vivid detail an embarrassing incident the Legion's P.R. machinery has attempted to hush up. While attempting to interfere in a political dispute on Talok VIII, Mon-El suffered a violent mental breakdown, according to Nahtahnje.

Legion records are conveniently sketchy on the details of this rampage (while unusually thorough in cataloguing the group's grievances against Nahtahnje, whom Tasmia considers a political enemy), but there's no doubt the berserk hero attacked and injured fellow Legionnaires Gim Allon, Thom Kallor, and Brin Londo, finally being physically restrained only by Kallor's powers.

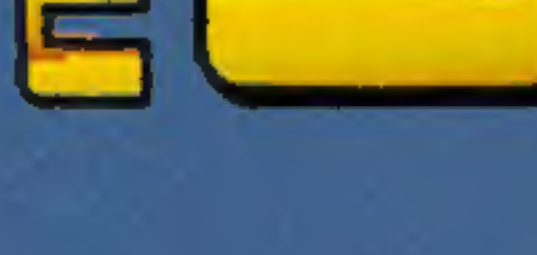
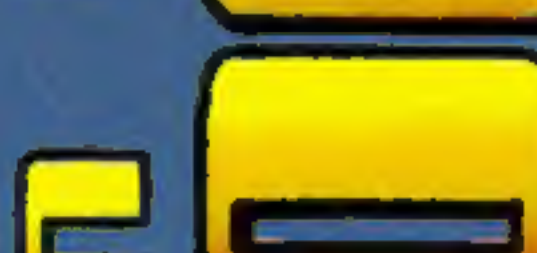
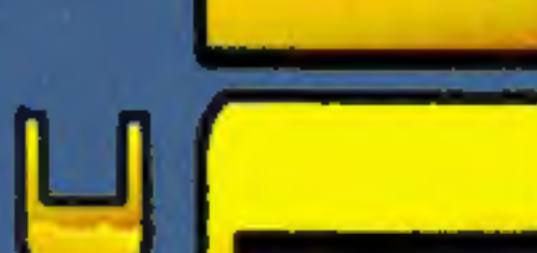
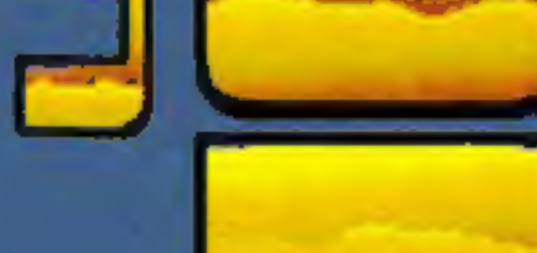
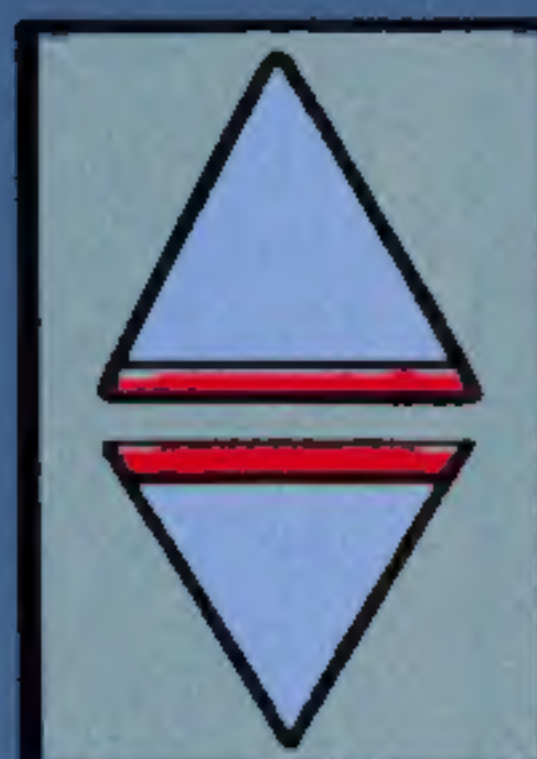
Ultimately the Legionnaires had to project Mon-El into the Phantom Zone and simply wait out his fit before they could resume their interference in the Talok VIII dispute.

But perhaps the Legionnaires talk so little about that incident because it was quickly overshadowed by another, far more frightening breakdown. Legion records, obtained only through the invocation of the Information-Freedom Decree, provide sketchy details of the greatest Mon-El rampage of them all.

The episode was apparently triggered when the Daxamite developed an immunity to the serum that was protecting him from lead poisoning. As Brainiac 5 worked to update the serum, Mon-El suffered a complete breakdown that some Legionnaires have privately admitted was a suicidal rage.

The Legion headquarters took a battering. Records indicate the damage Mon-El inflicted cost 30,000 credits to repair. Finally, the

((scroll down for further text))



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((scroll up for previous text))

berserk titan, in an apparent attempt to end his life, simply streaked out of the headquarters and threw himself at super-speed into the Earth's polymer shield.

In his weakened condition, the ploy almost worked. The mighty Legion had no alternative but to project the critically wounded Mon-El into the Phantom Zone to save the hero from himself.

Even then, Legionnaires Tinya Wazzo and Tellus had to enter the Zone and physically force the rampaging titan to submit, against his will, to attempts to save his life. Finally, a life-saving injection was administered while Mon-El was restrained bodily by teammates Jo Nah and Tellus.

Unfortunately, that incident did not mark the end of the psychological battering Tasmia was subjected to. In the weeks that followed, Mon-El's violent mood swings and long, sullen period of silence continued. But Tasmia's torment would grow far worse after the subsequent unexpected death of Mon-El's close friend Superboy.

After that tragedy, Mon-El's obsessive, suicidal behavior seemed to take on an entirely new scope, totally eclipsing whatever geniality remained a part of his nature -- a grim foreshadowing of things to come.

((End of Chapter -- scroll down for further text))

